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THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR, A

PARAPHRASE AND VERSION

OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

BY

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

CONTAINING THE LATTER PART OF

THE HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

AS RECORDED BY THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

DISPOSED IN THE ORDER OF AN HARMONY.

TENTH EDITION—CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY ANDREW KIPPIS, D.D. F.R.S. AND S.A.

Sint Scripturæ tuæ deliciæ meæ! Nec decipiar in eis, nec decipiam ex eis!

AUG.

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PREFACE.

THE publication of this *second volume* of the *FAMILY EXPOSITOR* hath been delayed so long, beyond my own expectation, and that of my friends, that it may perhaps seem necessary to introduce it with an apology for that delay. But it would be tedious to enumerate a variety of circumstances which have concurred to occasion it. It is generally known, that the unusual severity of the last winter laid a kind of embargo on the press; and they that are at all acquainted with the business of printing, will easily apprehend, that under the most faithful and careful direction, a work of considerable bulk is liable to many other interruptions, even where the manuscript is entirely finished before the impression is begun. But above all, the chief reason why this hath been published no sooner, is (what I hope my subscribers will easily excuse) the large addition I have made of more than fifty sheets to the hundred which I was by the proposals obliged to deliver.

On the mention of this, I think myself obliged to renew my thanks to those, who, by honouring me with their names and encouragement on this occasion, have put it into my power to publish the work with such improvements; and shall think myself happy, if those improvements, however laborious and expensive to the author, may render it more acceptable and useful to them.

The tables prefixed to the first volume are included in this, and represent the disposition of the harmony in so clear a view, that by comparing them together it would not be difficult to find any particular text. But a deference to the request of some of the subscribers, engaged me to add another table at the end of this volume (of the same kind with that in Mr. Bonnel's Harmony,) which will at once direct both to the section and page where any verse may presently be found.

I cannot pretend so much as to conjecture when the remainde of my undertaking will be completed. I shall however proceed in it as fast as my health and other affairs will permit. In the mean time, I think it necessary to observe, that I have, by the advice of some considerate and judicious friends, deferred the index, and some other things which I intended to have thrown into an appendix here, till I have finished what I am preparing on the Acts; that so they may stand, as they very properly will, at the end of the historical books of the New Testament.

How far the subscribers to these two volumes may think it proper to encourage the rest, must be referred to themselves. In the mean time, as that must be exceeding precarious which depends on the continuance of one man's life and health, I would desire permission here to take leave of my friends, at least for the present, with such a serious address as may be the most substantial expression of my sincere gratitude and respect.

I should have thought, my honoured friends, that I had made you a very unworthy return for this public token of your regard to me, if I had offered [redacted] merely an *amusement*, though ever so *critical* and *polite*. It had been much better, on both sides, that the work should never have been undertaken or perused, than that these *Divine authors* should be treated like a set of *profane classics*; or that the sacred and momentous transactions they relate should be huddled and read like an invented tale, or a common history. I have often reminded *myself* of it, and permit me now, Sirs, solemnly to remind *you*, that these are the *memoirs* of the holy Jesus, the *Saviour* of sinful men, *whom to know is life eternal*, and whom to neglect is everlasting destruction. *We* have here the *authentic records* of that *gospel* which was intended as the great medicine for our souls; of that *character* which is our pattern; of that *death* which is our ransom; of *him*, in short, whose *name* we bear as we are professed *Christians*, and before whose *tribunal* we are all shortly to appear, that our eternal existence may be determined, blissful, or miserable, according to our regard to what he has taught, and done, and endured. Let not the *greatest* therefore think it beneath their notice; nor the *meanest* imagine, that, amidst all the

most necessary cares and labours, they can find any excuse for neglecting, or even for postponing it:

Had I not been fully convinced of the *certainty* and *importance* of *Christianity*, I should not have determined to devote my whole life to its service (for on the principles of *natural religion*, I know the *soul* to be *immortal*, and should expect nothing but its ruin in the ways of the most sanctified fraud :) but as I am thus convinced, I must make it my humble request to every one that enters on the perusal of these volumes, that they may, for a little while at least, be the employment of his retired hours; and that as he proceeds from one section to another, he would pause and reflect, "Whose *words* do I "hear? Whose *actions* do I survey? Whose *sufferings* do "I contemplate?" And as all must know they are the *words*, the *actions*, and the *sufferings* of Jesus the Son of God, our supreme *Lord*, and our final *Judge*, let it be farther and very seriously inquired in what degree the obvious and confessed *design* of the glorious *gospel* has been practically regarded and complied with: "Can I, in my heart, think that I am a "*disciple* whom such a *Master* will approve, and whom he "will choose for his attendant in that world of glory to which "he is now gone?" Let the plainness of this advice be forgiven; for such is the temper and conduct of most who call themselves *Christians*, that, if this religion be true, their cold and unaffecting knowledge of the *history of Christ*, and of the *purposes* of his *appearance*, will only serve to furnish out matter for eternal self-accusation and remorse: and he is, at best, but a *learned and polite infidel* who would not rather be the instrument of conducting the lowest creature, capable of reading or hearing these lines, to the saving knowledge of a *crucified Redeemer*, than fill the most refined nation with his own applause, while the *grace* of the *Saviour* is forgotten, or his *service* neglected.

I have yet one farther request to add to those of my readers who are heads of families; which is, that they would please to remember the title of the work, and consider it as chiefly intended in its most essential parts, for a Family Expositor. I heartily rejoice in the reason which I have to hope, that, low as our religious character is fallen in these degenerate days, acts of domestic worship are yet performed by multitudes of

Christians of various denominations: yet I cannot but fear, that the scriptures are not so constantly read at such seasons as they formerly were; an omission which must be to the great detriment both of children and servants. One would think, that those who believe the *Divine authority* of *Scripture*, and its *infinite importance*, should be easily prevailed upon to restore this useful exercise, at least for one part of the day; and I would hope, that what I here offer them may render it more agreeable and useful. It would give me inexpressible delight to find that this is the case in those families with which I am most intimately acquainted; and would be an encouragement to hope this work may be proportionably useful in places and times to which neither my observation nor intelligence can extend.

I shall conclude this preface, with my hearty prayers, that, weak and imperfect as these labours are, the *Divine blessing* may *every where* and *always* attend them; and that it may rest on all who have patronized them, and on all who shall peruse them! May every prejudice against the *truth* of Christianity, *or against* its *power*, be vanquished! May the most insensible minds be awakened to attend to *religion*, and may the weak and languishing be animated to press on to greater attainments in it! May those that are preparing for the *service of the sanctuary* (as every part of this performance is their concern,) be by every part of it more abundantly furnished for the various duties of their important office! And may those who are as yet but *babes in knowledge*, through the Divine blessing *grow* by that *sincere milk of the word*, which is here presented, as I trust, in its genuine simplicity! In a word, may many *persons*, *families*, and larger *societies*, receive devout pleasure and solid lasting improvement from it; that the great God, *of whom and through whom are all things, may in all be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord*, who in all the sacred volumes, and especially here, is *the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last*, to whom be everlasting honour, love, and obedience! *Amen.*

NORTHAMPTON, *August* 9, 1740.

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THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR.

THE LATTER PART OF THE HISTORY OF CHRIST,

AS RECORDED BY THE EVANGELISTS.

SECT. XC.

Christ goes up to a mountain, where he is transfigured, and discourses with his disciples concerning the expectation the Jews had of Elijah. Mat. XVII. 1—13. Mark IX. 2—13. Luke IX. 28—36.

MARK IX. VER. 2.

MARK IX. VER. 2.—AND [LUKE, it came to pass] after six days, [LUKE, *or* about eight days after these sayings,] Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John [his brother,] and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves. [LUKE, to pray.] [MAT. XVII. 1. LUKE IX. 28.]

AND it came to pass after six days, [*or*] if you include the first and last, *about eight days after these discourses,* which were related in the two last sections, *Jesus took with him* those three disciples whom he honoured with something of a peculiar intimacy, (compare Mark v. 37, and Mat. xxvi. 37,) namely, *Peter and James, and his brother John, and brought them up privately, to an high mountain apart* from the people,[a] whither he retired *to pray;* intending, as he often did, to spend the night in that holy exercise.[b]

SECT. XC. Mark IX. 2.

LUKE IX. 29. And as he prayed, [MARK, he was transfigured

And as he was praying, it came to pass that *he was* suddenly, in a most glorious manner,

Luke IX. 29.

[a] *An high mountain apart* from the people.] Jerom tells us. (Epist. 17. 18.) that there was in his days an ancient tradition that this was Mount Tabor, which lay in the tribe of Zebulon. Its standing *apart,* (as Mr. Maundrell observes that it does, Travels, p. 112.) is to be sure no argument to prove it; for that expression only signifies that it was a private retirement, which it might have been, had it made part of a ridge of mountains. However, as this happened at the distance of six days, there seems to be but little probability in Mr. Fleming's conjecture, that since Christ was just before near Cesarea Philippi, this must be *the mountain* in that neighbourhood on which one of Jeroboam's calves had been worshipped; over which he thinks it a kind of triumph that the Shekinah was thus gloriously manifested, where it had been so long affronted by idolatry. See Fleming's Christology, Vol. I. p. 40.

[b] To spend the night in that holy exercise.] This appears from Luke ix. 37, where we read of their *coming down from the mountain the next day.* See p. 8.

SECT. XC. *transfigured in their presence; and the form of his countenance was changed,*[c] [*so that*] *his face shone* with a brightness *like* that of *the sun; and* his whole body was clothed with such a lustre, as shone through *his raiment*, insomuch that the appearance of it *was* all *white and dazzling*,[d] *shining* so *exceedingly*, that it seemed as *white as snow*, [*yea*] as resplendent *as the light* itself, to *so* great a degree *as no fuller on earth could whiten it*. Such a glory did God confer on his Son, as an earnest of that in which he was finally to appear; and he permitted these his servants to see it, that they might not be offended at those scenes of deep abasement in which they were shortly to attend him. (Compare Mat. xxvi. 37, sect clxxxii.)

Luke IX. 29.

before them, and] the fashion of his countenance was altered, [*so that* his face did shine as the sun;] and his raiment *was* white and glistering, [MARK, shining exceeding white as snow] [*or* as the light,] [MARK, so as no fuller on earth can white them.] [MAT. XVII. 2. MARK IX.—2, 3.]

Mark IX. 4. *And behold there appeared to them*, at the same time that they saw their Lord in this splendid form, *two men*, that were *talking with Jesus* in a language and accent which the three apostles heard and understood, *who were* known to be *Moses* the great giver, *and Elijah* the zealous restorer of the law. These were the persons whom they saw with Christ, in whose honour their respective ministrations terminated; *who appearing* to their view *in* forms of *glory*, somewhat resembling that which he now wore himself, *spake of his exit*, or departure out of the present life and state, *which he was shortly* after, even at the ensuing passover, *to accomplish at Jerusalem*;[e] suggesting and enlarging on such thoughts as were proper to animate him to so painful and glorious a conflict.

Luke IX. 31.

MARK IX. 4. And [behold] there appeared unto them [LUKE, two men] talking with Jesus, [LUKE, which were Moses and Elias:] [MAT. XVII. 3 LUKE IX. 30.]

LUKE IX. 31. Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 *But Peter, and they that were with him*, even

32 But Peter, and they that were with

[c] *The form of his countenance was changed.*] This was so striking a circumstance, that Eunapius (Vit. Jambl. p. 22.) relates a story of Jamblicus, which seems evidently to be borrowed from this; as many things which Philostratus tells us of Apollonius Tyaneus seem also to have been borrowed from other histories recorded of Christ by the evangelists.

[d] *White and dazzling.*] The words λευκὰ ἐξαστράπτων may literally be rendered *white as lightning*; but as this clause stands here connected with parallel passages in other evangelists, I chose to render it *dazzling*, that some proper gradation might be observed, which would otherwise have been destroyed.

[e] *Spake of his exit, which he was shortly to accomplish at Jerusalem.*] Dr. Hammond and Le Clerc seem greatly mistaken in referring this to Christ's victory over the impenitent Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; for though the word ἔξοδος does sometimes signify a *military expedition*, (see Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 219.) yet it is plainly used for *death*, or *departure out of the world*, 2 Pet. i. 15; and Wisd. iii. 2; which suits much better here with the construction, ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ.

him, were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

the two other disciples, did not see the beginning of this glorious vision, nor hear the whole of this wonderful and edifying discourse; for, wearied with the labours of the preceding day, they *were* quite *overburdened* and sunk down *with sleep; but being awakened* with the splendour of those rays which pierced through the darkness of the night that had before favoured their slumbers, *they saw*, to their inexpressible astonishment *his* unusual *glory, and the two men who were standing with him*, and heard the conclusion of their conference, from whence they collected who they were.[f] SECT. XC. Luke IX. 32.

33—And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter [answered and] said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and [if thou wilt] let us make [here] three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: [MAT. XVII. 4. MARK IX. 5.]

MARK IX. 6. For he wist not [LUKE, what he said, *or*] what to say, *for they* were sore afraid. [LUKE IX. 33.]

And it came to pass that, just *as they were departing from him, Peter answered and said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here* in such a circumstance as this: let this glorious appearance and converse be prolonged; for we could delight to spend all the remainder of our days thus; *and* therefore, *if thou pleasest, let us make three tents here,*[g] *for Thee one, and for Moses one, and one for Elijah*, that thou with them mayest lodge here in a more convenient manner. This was indeed a wild kind of proposal, ill suiting the state of these glorified persons, or the subject of their late discourse: but it is the less to be wondered at, considering the great surprise in which Peter was, *for he knew not what he said*, [*or*] *should say; for* such was the effect it had on him and the two other disciples who were then present, that *they were* vastly *terrified* at the majesty of this unparalleled sight, which broke out upon them at once in so unexpected a manner. 33 Mark IX. 6.

[f] Heard the conclusion of their conference, *&c.*] It might not perhaps have been proper they should have heard the *whole* of it: God might intend to reveal some of those things to them by the Spirit, and the knowledge of others might be reserved to the discoveries of the heavenly state,

[g] *Let us make three tents here.*] Mr. Fleming thinks it is as if he had said, "Lord, let this mountain be to Israel "now, what Sinai was to our Fathers: "hold, as it were, thy court here; and "let the people resort hither to learn thy "will, and pay their homage to thee, at-"tended by these thy glorified servants." (See Fleming's Christology, Vol. I. p. 46.) But this seems too great a refinement, and too deep a scheme. I rather chuse to interpret them as words of *rapturous surprise*, intended merely to express the *pleasure* they had in what they saw and heard. The proposal was, as St. Mark observes, very improper; but perhaps few, in such an astonishing circumstance, could have been perfectly masters of themselves.—The tents they proposed to build, must be only slight huts or bowers; and there is no reason at all to suppose, they meant any sumptuous tabernacles like that of Moses in the wilderness; and, that no such idea might accidentally be raised, I chose to use the word *tents*.

SECT. XC. Luke IX. 34.

And as he was speaking thus; behold there came a bright cloud, which in a most surprising manner spread itself over the top of the mountain, *and overshadowed them* all: *and* the disciples were seized with such a kind of religious horror, that *they feared when they entered into the cloud*,[h] and saw it diffused on every side of them. *And behold*, an ever memorable circumstance then happened; for *there came a* most awful *voice out of the cloud*, as the sacred symbol of God's immediate presence, *which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*;[i] *hear ye him* therefore with the humblest submission and obedience, as the object of my dearest complacency, and your surest guide to duty and happiness, in all respects superior to the greatest of your prophets.

Luke IX. 34. While he thus spake, [behold,] there came a [bright] cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared, as they entered into the cloud. [Mat. XVII. 5.—Mark IX. 7.—]

35 And [behold,] there came a voice out of the cloud, [which said] This is my beloved Son, [in whom I am well pleased,] hear [ye] him. [Mat. XVII.—5. Mark IX.—7.

Mat. XVII. 6. *And when the disciples heard* [*this voice*,] *they fell* prostrate *on their faces* to the ground with the humblest reverence, *and were exceedingly terrified* by this tremendous manifestation of the present Deity. *And Jesus*, knowing their confusion, *came and touched them, and said, Rise up, and be not afraid*; infusing into them, at the same moment, a secret strength and fortitude of mind. (Compare Dan. x. 10, 19.)

Mat. XVII. 6. And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

Mark IX. 8. *And on a sudden, while the* heavenly *voice was uttered, Jesus was found alone*, Moses and Elijah disappearing in a moment; [*and*] the disci-

Mark IX. 8. And suddenly [Luke, when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone: *and*] when

[h] *There came a bright cloud, and overshadowed them, &c.*] I cannot think it probable, (though a late eminent critic has so explained it,) that this only means that *the cloud cast a shadow* which fell upon them, but rather that it *spread over the mountain*; and this not like a canopy or umbrella, but that it covered it in such a manner as a cloud does; yet with this difference, that it was more like a thick smoke than a shower; and that whereas the skirts of clouds are generally rarer than the central parts, this was darker towards the edges, a glory being *in the midst*: and probably it was the darker part with which the apostles were enveloped, while *the excellent glory*, (as St. Peter calls it, 2 Pet i. 17,) seemed much higher, and the rays of it were much attempered, by that part of the cloudy veil which was between it and them. And thus we know, that the Shekinah had appeared in former ages; particularly when it took possession of the tabernacle of Moses, Exod. xl. 34, 35, and the temple of Solomon, I Kings viii. 10, 11.

[i] *In whom I am well pleased.*] Though neither Mark nor Luke have given us these words, we may be sure that they were really spoken, as we have the concurrent testimony both of Matthew, and of Peter, who has thus quoted them, 2 Pet. i. 17. Some have thought their being omitted by Mark, an intimation that Peter did not review that gospel with any great accuracy, supposing it was (as Clemens Alexandrinus reports,) put into his hands.—Perhaps the command that is added to *hear him*, may refer to that solemn charge to *hear* the great *prophet*, Deut. xviii. 15.

they had[lift up their eyes, *and*] looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. [MAT. XVII. 8.—LUKE IX. 36.—]

ples, *lifting up their eyes*, upon the kind encouragement that he had given them, [*and*] *looking round about* them for the persons *they* had seen but just before, *saw no man any more, but Jesus only with themselves*, who now again appearing in his usual form, graciously entered into conversation with them in the same condescending manner he was used to do.

SECT. XC. Mark IX. 8.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, [Jesus charged them, that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.] [MAT. XVII. 9.]

And as they came down from the mountain on which this wonderful transaction had passed, *Jesus* strictly *charged them, that they should tell no one what they had seen, unless* it were *when the Son of man was risen from the dead*; lest, till that glorious evidence was given of his divine mission, this story should appear as an idle dream, or an incredible tale. 9

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean: [And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.] [LUKE IX. 36.]

And when he spake of rising from the dead, *they laid hold on that word*,[k] *disputing among themselves what this rising from the dead could mean*; for as often, *and* as plainly, as Christ had declared it to them, they could not persuade themselves to understand it in a literal sense. However, in obedience to the charge he gave them, *they were silent* as to what had passed, *and told no one in those days any of the things which they had* now *seen* and heard. 10

MAT. XVII. 10. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come? [MARK IX. 11.]

And his disciples, as they could not doubt but he was the Messiah, took that opportunity of informing themselves as to a scruple which had long lain on their minds, and *asked him, saying, Why then do the scribes*, the teachers of our nation, and professed students of the law, *say, that Elijah must first come* before the Messiah appear? Is this vision, that we have now seen, all the coming of that prophet which was to be expected? Mat. XVII. 10

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things;

And Jesus replying, said unto them, It does *indeed* appear from the scripture, that *Elijah shall first come* to make way for the Messiah, *and regulate all things*,[l] by preaching repen- 11

[k] *They laid hold on that word.*] So I think τον λογον εκρατησαν may most literally be rendered; the verb often signifying *to lay hold on*, and, in consequence of that, *resolutely to retain*; but never, that I can recollect, *to keep a secret*. Compare, Mat. ix. 25; xiv. 3; Mark xii. 12; and Rev. xx. 2.—I think the words προς εαυτους should be joined with συζητουντες, as they are with the same word Mark i. 27; ix. 16; Luke xxii. 23; and Acts ix. 29.

[l] *Shall first come and regulate all things.*] It is plain that αποκαταστησει here, (as

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tance and reformation: *and yet*, how little is the influence that his coming will have upon a wicked and ungrateful generation? And *how is it* also *written of the Son of man* himself,[m] that illustrious Person whom Elijah is to introduce? It is plainly foretold, *that he must suffer many things, and be contemptuously rejected;* which evidently implies that his forerunner also shall be disregarded, and his preaching slighted. And the event, you know, has been answerable to it: do not therefore expect another to appear, *but* observe what *I* now *say to you*, while I assure you *that Elijah is indeed come already, as it is written of him*[n] in various passages of scripture; (see Isa. xl. 3, and Mal. iii. 1;) *and they* who pretended so eagerly to expect him, *did not know* and acknowledge *him, but have treated him* in the most arbitrary and cruel manner, even *just as they pleased*, without any regard to piety, justice, or humanity: and *thus likewise shall the Son of man* quickly *suffer by them*, and with the utmost enmity and malice shall be persecuted by a hardened people, who will shew no more regard to him than to Elijah his herald.

Mat. xvii. 11

[and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.] [MARK IX. 12.]

12 But I say unto you, that Elias is [indeed] come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed, [as it is written of him:] likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. [MARK IX. 13.]

13 *Then the disciples understood that he spake to them concerning John the Baptist*, who was foretold under the name of Elijah, as the Messiah was under that of David. (Compare Mal. iv. 5, and Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.)

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

αποκαλαψασις, Acts iii. 21;) cannot, as it generally does, signify *restoring* things to their former state, but only, in the general, *reducing them to order*. It is strange Tertullian (de Resur. cap. 35,) should infer from hence, that Elijah the prophet is to come before Christ's second appearance. Grotius has well confuted that wild notion in his annotations, in loc.

[m] *And yet how is it written of the Son of man himself?*] The construction of this verse, in the original, is as perplexed as almost any in the New Testament. The Prussian Testament, which is followed by the late English version, renders it roundly and elegantly enough: "It is true," said he, "that Elias must "first come to restore all things, and "that it is foretold of him, as well as of "the Son of man, that he should have "much to suffer, and be rejected with "contempt." But this is not strictly agreeable to the original, nor can I find the martyrdom of John the Baptist any where foretold in the Old Testament: I choose therefore to render this clause as a question.—That *και* sometimes signifies [and yet,] evidently appears from John v. 40; Luke ix. 45; Mat. xxiii. 37; and other places.

[n] *Elijah is indeed come already, as it is written of him.*] For the reason assigned in the preceding note, I choose to connect these two clauses, and conclude that the words which lie between, both in the original and in our translation, are to be included in a parenthesis.

IMPROVEMENT.

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How glorious and delightful was this view of our blessed *Redeemer*, which the *apostles* had, when he was *transfigured before them*, clothed, as it were, with the divine *Shekinah*, and *shining* with a lustre *like* that of *the sun!* How pleasing and how edifying must it be to them, to see with him Moses and Elijah, those two eminent saints who had so many ages ago quitted our world, but whose names they had often read in the sacred records, with wonder and reverence. Mat. xvii. 2-3

Well might *Peter* say, *It is good for us to be here.* Well might he be contented to resign his entertainments and his hopes elsewhere, that they might prolong these delightful moments, feasting their eyes with these divine visions, and their minds with these more than human discourses. Nor can we wonder that the scene, transitory as it was, left so abiding a savour on his spirits, that in an epistle which he wrote many years after, and but a little before his death, he should single this story from a thousand others to attest it as he does, and to argue from it. (Compare 2 Pet. i. 16—18.) But oh how much more desirable is it to stand upon *mount Zion*, and to behold those *brighter glories* which our Jesus wears in the heavenly regions! To behold, not merely Moses and Elijah, but all the prophets, the apostles, and martyrs; and, in a word, all the *saints of God* in every age, whether to us personally known or unknown, surrounding him in a radiant circle; and not only to behold them, but to converse with them. *Lord, it is good for us to be there*, in our desires at least, and in our meditations, till thou pleasest to call us to that happy world, and to take us *thither*, where no *drowsiness* will cloud our eyes, where no *hurry* will discompose our thoughts; but where the perfection of *holiness* and of *love*, shall cast out every degree of *terror*, as well as of *sorrow*. Luke ix. 32. Mark ix. 6.

In the mean time, let us reverently attend to that *Saviour* who appeared in this majestic form, and who comes recommended to us with so many *testimonials* of his divine authority. He was again declared by a *voice from heaven*, to be the *beloved Son of God;* as such let us *hear him*, receiving all his revelations with the *assurance of faith*, and all his commands with the *obedience of love.* If these sentiments govern our hearts and our lives, the thoughts of that *departure* from this world, which we are *shortly to accomplish*, will be no grief or terror to our souls. Like our blessed *Master*, we may connect the views of it, and intermix discourse upon it, with the most delightful enjoyments and converse; nay, it will serve to render them yet more pleasing. For who would not long to be made *conformable to Christ*, even in *his sufferings* and *death*, if it may Mat. xvii. 5. Luke ix. 31.

SECT. XC. be a means of *transforming us* into the resemblance of *his glories!*

SECT. XCI.

Christ, descending from the mountain on which he was transfigured, drives out an evil spirit which had obstinately withstood the attempts of his apostles. Mat. XVII. 14—21. Mark IX. 14—29. Luke IX. 37—43.—

Luke IX. 37.

SECT. XCI. THUS did our Lord discourse with his three disciples after he had been transfigured in

Luke IX. 37 so glorious a manner in their presence: *and it came to pass, that on the next day, when they came down from the mountain* on which the night had been so delightfully spent, *a great*

Mark IX. 14 *crowd of people met him. And, being come to the disciples*, and particularly to the rest of the apostles, who, knowing their master was on the hill, waited for him in the adjacent valley, *he saw a great multitude around them, and*, among the rest, some of *the scribes* and Pharisees, who were *disputing with them*, and endeavoured to take the opportunity of their Master's absence to expose and distress them.

15 *And immediately*, as soon as he came near them, *all the multitude seeing him, was struck into astonishment* at those unusual rays of majesty and glory which yet remained on his countenance;[a] *and, running to him*, they *saluted him* with the greatest marks of respect and affection: yet the scribes and Pharisees, without

Luke IX. 37. AND it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

Mark IX. 14. And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed; and, running to him, saluted him.

[a] *Was struck into astonishment*, &c.] It is strange that so few critics should have said any thing concerning the reason of the multitude's being thus astonished. It could not be, as Doctor Clarke supposes, his coming down from the mountain the day after he went up; for they were gathered round it in expectation of his descent; and I do not remember that he ever continued more than *one night* in such a retirement. Nor is it easy to imagine, the multitude were under any apprehension, after he had been no longer absent, that they never should be able to find him again. I therefore follow Dr. Whitby's natural conjecture in this paraphrase, which is agreeable to what we read of Moses, that *the skin of his face shone when he came down from the mount.* (Compare Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, and 2 Cor. iii. 7.) One would indeed have expected that Luke, who has mentioned the lustre on Stephen's countenance, when pleading his cause before the sanhedrim, (Acts vi. 15) should have taken some notice of the fact here supposed: but it is observable, Mark tells the story before us far more circumstantially than either of the other evangelists; which, by the way, is another most convincing proof, that his gospel was not, (as Mr. Whiston supposes,) an abridgment of Matthew.

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regarding his return, continued their ill-natured attack on his disciples.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

And, taking notice of the warm dispute they were engaged in, *he asked the scribes*, What is the point you are debating, and *what do you contend with them about?* Mark IX. 16.

17 And [Luke, behold,] [a *certain* man] of the multitude, [kneeling down to him,] answered and [Luke, cried out, saying,] Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; [Mat. XVII. 14. Luke IX. 38.—]

And presently, upon his making this inquiry, *behold, a* [*certain*] *man of the multitude* came, and *kneeling down to him, answered* the question in effect; *and, crying out* with a loud and eager voice, *said*, O thou great Teacher and *Master* in our Israel, *I have brought thee my* poor afflicted *son, who has* for a long time been possessed with *a dumb spirit;* and the malicious demon has deprived him of the use of his hearing and speech: And, in this moving case, 17

Mat. XVII. 15. Lord, [I beseech thee, look upon my son, for he is mine only child; *and*] have mercy on *him*, for he is lunatic, and sore vexed: for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. [Luke IX.—38.]

O Lord, I beseech thee look upon my son, for he is mine only child; [*and*] yet, instead of being a comfort to me, is a most melancholy spectacle of horror; let me intreat thee, therefore, to *have compassion on* [*him*,] *for he is lunatic*,[b] *and grievously tormented* with terrible fits, which frequently seize him, and sometimes endanger his life: *for he often falleth into the fire, and often into the water.* Mat. XVII. 15

Luke IX. 39. And lo, [wheresoever] *this* spirit taketh him, he suddenly crieth out, and it teareth him, that he foameth again, [and gnasheth with *his* teeth, and pineth away;] and bruising him, *it* hardly departeth from him. [Mark IX. 18.—]

And behold, wherever [*this*] *spirit seizes him, he* has no strength or thought to take care of himself, but *suddenly cries out* in a most violent manner; *and it convulses him* so, *that he foams again* at the mouth, *and gnashes with his teeth* in extremity of anguish; *and* thus he miserably *pines*, and withers *away* in the bloom of his age: *and* [*it*] is *with* great *difficulty* that the malignant demon *departs from him* for a little while, *having bruised him* to such a degree by violent distortions, that he is hardly able to use his limbs in the interval of these dreadful agitations. Luke IX. 39.

Mat. XVII. 16. And I brought him to thy disciples, [and spake to *them*,] [Luke, and

And I am persuaded there is some more than ordinary difficulty in the case; for *I brought him to thy disciples, and spake to* [*them*] concerning him, *and entreated* [*them*] in the most affectionate manner to use their utmost efforts *to cast him* Mat. XVII. 16

[b] *He is lunatic.*] Grotius well observes, that this word (which exactly answers the etymology of the original) might with great propriety be used, though there was something preternatural in the case; as the *evil spirit* would undoubtedly take advantage of those disorders into which the brain and nerves of this unhappy child were thrown by the changes of the *moon*.

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out; and they could not accomplish it, nor *heal him.*

besought *them* to cast him out, and they could not cure him. [MARK IX. 18.—LUKE IX. 40.]

Mat. xvii. 17

Then Jesus said in reply to him, O ye incredulous and perverse generation of men, *how long shall I be with you* before you will learn a becoming regard to me? *How long shall I endure* that infidelity which *you* are shewing on so many occasions? And thus did he mean at once to reprove the weakness of faith in the father, and in his disciples, as well as the obstinacy and perverseness of the Jewish teachers, who were triumphing in their present disappointment: and then, turning to the father of the child and his attendants, he said, *Bring thy son hither to me*, and you shall see what my power can effect.

17 Then Jesus answered [him] and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring [LUKE, thy son] hither to me. [MARK IX. 19. LUKE IX. 41.]

Mark IX. 20.

And upon this *they brought him* that was possessed to Jesus, and presented the poor creature *to him. And immediately, as soon as he saw him, while he was yet coming, the* evil *spirit* in a rage wrought in him with such violence that he *threw him down and convulsed him; and he fell on the ground* with great force, and there lay, *and rolled* from one side to the other, a spectacle of horror, *foaming* at the mouth, and sweating profusely, till nature was almost exhausted, and he seemed ready to die.

MARK IX. 20. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, [as he was yet a-coming,] straightway the spirit [threw him down, and] tare him, and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. [LUKE IX. 42.—]

21 *And*, that the greatness of the cure might the more plainly appear, while the unhappy youth lay thus before him, *he asked his father, How long time is it that he hath been thus* afflicted? *And he said*, Even *from his childhood*:[c] *And* the evil spirit is so outrageous, and so malicious, that *it frequently*, as I said, *has thrown him into the fire, and into the waters*, when he has happened to be near them, as if he watched for opportunities *to destroy him*; so that I am sensible it is a most difficult, as well as dreadful case: *but if thou canst do any thing* in it,[d] *have compassion on us, and help us*; for surely none ever needed thy pity more.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

[c] *From his childhood.*] So the word παιδιοθεν properly signifies; and, I think with Grotius, it is much more convenient to render it thus; than *from his infancy.*

[d] *If thou canst do any thing* in it.] Perhaps, observing the fit grow more violent on his approaching Christ, his faith might begin to fail. This was a very natural manner of speaking, and yet strongly pathetic, and obliquely interesting the honour of Christ, in the issue of the affair. See Raphel. ex Xen. p. 73.

23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

And Jesus said unto him, The question is not at all concerning my power, but concerning the strength of thy faith; for *if thou canst* firmly and cheerfully *believe*, the deliverance will surely be effected, as *all things* of this kind [*are*] *possible to him that believeth.*[e] SECT. XCI. Mark IX. 23.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

And immediately the father of the child, touched to the very heart to think that his dear son might possibly lose the cure through the weakness of his own faith, *cried out* aloud, *and said with tears* in his eyes, and ardour in his countenance, *Lord, I* do from my heart *believe* that thy power is unlimited; yet such is my frailty, that when I look on this spectacle of misery, my faith is ready to fail me again: *help* me therefore against *my unbelief*, by mitigating the circumstances of the trial, or communicating suitable strength to my soul.[f] 24

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the [unclean] spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. [LUKE IX. —42.—MAT. XVII. 18.—]

Then Jesus seeing that the crowd ran together, and was continually increasing round them, *rebuked the unclean spirit* which had possessed the child, *and said unto him*, with an air of superior power and divine authority, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit*, who has so maliciously deprived this youth of his speech and hearing, *I* strictly *charge* and command *thee* immediately to *come out of him, and* presume to *enter into him no more*, nor farther to disquiet him as long as he lives. 25

26 And *the spirit* cried and rent him sore, and came out [of him;] and he was as one dead, insomuch

And immediately, as soon as he had spoken these words, [*the* evil *spirit*] *having cried out* with great carnestness, *and thrown him into violent distortions, came out of him; and* the poor youth had been so miserably handled, that *he* fell into a swoon, and *seemed as one dead, so* 26

[e] *If thou canst believe,* &c.] As the construction in the original is something uncommon, To *ει δυνασαι πιστευσαι*, I cannot forbear mentioning a singular conjecture which I lately had from the mouth of a very accurate critic, especially in biblical learning. He thinks, instead of To it might be Τι, as some copies read it; and then taking *πιστευσαι* to be the imperative mood, would render and paraphrase it with an interrogation after Τι; "*What dost* "*thou mean* by saying *if thou canst?*" referring to *ει δυνασαι* in the verse before: "*believe: all things are possible to him that* "*believeth;* see thou to the firmness of "thy faith; and leave the rest to me."

[f] *Help my unbelief,* &c.] It seems an inconvenience inseparable from this method of paraphrasing, that sometimes, (as in the present instance,) some lively and strongly pointed sentences should lose something of their spirit by it; yet keeping the original thus distinct, may in part remedy it; and, on the whole, many of these expressions are so full of meaning, that the general laws of interpretation require they should be unfolded. To observe the exact medium here, is a felicity, which I dare not say I have obtained, though I have laboured after it.

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that many who were present, *said, He is* undoubtedly quite *dead*, and will revive no more.

Mark IV. 27. *But Jesus, taking* hold of *him by the hand, lifted him up, and* strengthened him, so that *he arose* and stood on his feet. *And* when [*he*] thus had perfectly restored and *healed the child*, he took *and delivered him to his father*, who received him with an inexpressible mixture of joy and amazement. *And the child was well from that very hour*, and these terrible symptoms returned upon him no more.

Luke IX. 43. *And they* who beheld it *were all astonished at the mighty power of God*, by which this illustrious miracle had been wrought.

Mark IX. 28. *And when he* had left the multitude, and *was come into the house*, where he then resided, *his disciples*, somewhat mortified at the repulse they had met with in their late attempt, *came to Jesus when* he was *alone, and asked him privately, Why could not we* prevail so far as to cast out this demon, and *expel him*, since we have performed many cures which seemed equally difficult?

Mat. XVII. 20. *And Jesus said unto them*, It was *because* of the remainder *of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, if you had* but the least degree of *faith* in a lively exercise, though it comparatively was but *as a grain of mustard seed*,[s] *you might* perform the greatest wonders, so as even to *say to this mountain* here in the neighbourhood, *Remove from this place to that, and it should* accordingly *remove; and*, in a word, *nothing will* 21 *be impossible to you. But* as to the case that was lately before us, *he* farther *said unto them, This* demon which possessed the child was one of a very obstinate *kind*, which *cannot* be expelled so readily as others; nor must you expect to have power over such spirits as these, to oblige them to *go forth by any means, unless* you do *by* frequent *prayer and fasting* intercede with God for his more abundant co-operation;

much that many said, He is dead. [MAT. XVII.—18.—]

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and he arose: [LUKE, and *he* healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.] [And the child was cured from that very hour.] [MAT. XVII. —18. LUKE IX. 42.]

LUKE IX. 43. And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God.

MARK IX. 28.— And when he was come into the house, his disciples [came to Jesus apart, and] asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? [MAT. XVII. 19.]

MAT. XVII. 20.— And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence unto yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, [he said unto them,] this kind [can come forth by nothing] but by prayer and fasting. [MARK IX. 29.]

[s] *Faith as a grain of mustard seed.*] It is very trifling to suppose, that here is reference to the *poignancy* of *mustard-seed*, as an emblem of a vigorous and lively faith. It is apparently a proverb to express any thing inconsiderably small, that being, as our Lord expresses it, one of *the smallest among seeds*. Thus the rabbies say, the globe of the earth is but as a grain of mustard-seed, when compared with the expanse of the heavens. See Drusius, in loc.

and by such extraordinary devotions endeavour to prepare your souls for his farther influences.[h] SECT. XCI.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xvii. 20. Mark ix. 14.

THE invidious opposition which these *scribes* and *Pharisees* made to our Lord, and the ill-natured joy they expressed in what they imagined would disgrace his *disciples*, appears exceeding odious; and it shews us the fatal effects of ambition, pride, and avarice, when they possess the hearts of those, who should be (as these by their office were,) *teachers of others*. Such qualities render those in the number of the most dangerous enemies of mankind, who ought to be its most affectionate friends, and most useful benefactors. May the light of the gospel break in on their souls, and form them to a better temper!

Mat. xvii. 14, 15, Luke ix. 38.

The solicitous concern of this *parent* when he saw *his child* under such sad symptoms of *disorder*, may surely remind persons in that relation, of the sentiments with which they should view those of *their children*, who are, in a spiritual sense, under the power of *Satan:* and of the importunity with which they should entreat, that the hand of *Christ* may be stretched out for their rescue.

A lively exercise of *faith* is greatly to be desired in this and all other applications of this nature. But alas, how often do we

[h] *This kind cannot go forth by any means, unless by prayer and fasting.*] An ingenious physician, mentioned by the learned Author of the Inquiry into Demoniacs, &c. p. 47, instead of ει προσευχη και νηστεια, would read εν προσοχῃ νηστεια, *by constant fasting;* and supposes it refers to the necessity of frequent and long continued abstinence, in order to the cure of such an epilectic distemper as the child in question had been subject to. But as the criticism is founded on mere conjecture, contrary to all the copies known in the world, so I cannot think it at all natural in itself, or pertinent to the occasion; for it seems not at all to our Lord's purpose to speak of the natural methods of cure, in answer to the apostles' demand why they could not miraculously perform it?—Nor can any instance be produced to prove that, the expression is proverbial for any thing very difficult—I could therefore see no reason to recede from the usual interpretation, which I have given in the paraphrase.—As for the interpretation of Chrysostom and Theophylact, who suppose that γενος signifies at large, this kind of beings, that is, demons, it seems very wrong; since the apostles evidently did cast out many demons, whatever peculiar malignity there might be in this and others of his rank, which might make more intense devotion necessary to eject them.—Sir Norton Knatchbull's sense is extremely forced, who understands it as if it had been said, This sort [of miraculous faith] *advances not but by prayer and fasting.* Raphelius has abundantly shewn how inconclusive those authorities from Xenophon are, by which he would justify so odd a version of εξελθειν. (See Raphel. Annot. ex Xen. p. 44—46.) And were the words considered as they stand in Mark, where there is nothing said of faith, it would be easy to perceive our Lord as speaking of a kind of demons which they *were not able to cast out:* and that some demons are more malignant than others, is most manifest from Mat. xii. 45. But oftentimes an explication has been built upon the words of one evangelist, and many learned remarks have been made to establish it, which could not be applied without great violence to suit the parallel place in another, and presently has fallen to the ground upon comparing them together.

SECT. XCI. Mat. IX. 24. find the remainders of a contrary principle! In how many instances does that passionate exclamation of *the father* in this story suit us? *Lord, we believe, help thou our unbelief!* How difficult is it, in the midst of so much guilt and weakness, of so much perplexity and unworthiness, to *believe* the promises of forgiveness and preservation, of grace and glory! Yet we may humbly hope, that He, who by his grace has wrought the divine principle in our souls, will maintain it there. Only let it be our concern to oppose those corruptions which would enervate and suppress it. Perhaps there are some of them which will not be driven out *but by prayer and fasting*, by deep humiliation, and more than ordinary solemnity and intenseness of devotion. But surely they have little regard to the peace and security of their souls, who can allot only a few hasty moments to them, when they have whole hours and days to bestow, not only on the labours, but even on the amusements of life.

Mat. xvii. 21.

SECT. XCII.

The disciples are offended at the warning Christ gives them of his approaching sufferings. He makes a miraculous provision for paying the tribute money. Mat. XVII. 22, *to the end.* Mark IX. 30—33.—Luke IX.—43—45.

MARK IX. 30.

SECT. XCII. Mark IX. 30. *AND while every one* of the spectators *was amazed* at this stupendous miracle wrought on the child who had been so terribly possessed, and *at all the* other extraordinary *things which Jesus did*, our Lord and his apostles left that place, and, setting out on a further progress, *they departed from thence, and passed* from the mountain on which he had been transfigured, *through* the rest of *Galilee: and* Jesus chose to do it as privately as he could; for *he was desirous that no one might know* [*it*,] lest the important conversation into which he then entered with his disciples should be interrupted. 31 *For while they continued* travelling and conversing *in Galilee*, and especially when they came to the places where they lodged, *Jesus taught his disciples*[a] more largely than he

MARK IX. 30. AND [while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did,] they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it*. [LUKE IX. —43.—]

31—For [while they abode in Galilee, Jesus] taught his disciples, and said unto them, [MAT. XVII. 22.—LUKE IX. —43.]

[a] *For Jesus taught his disciples.*] Mark assigns this as the reason why he desired his journey should be private, *viz.* that he might have an opportunity to talk over this subject at large: which shews that the continuance or abode in Galilee,

had done before, what was to befal him. (Compare Mat. xvi. 21; Mark viii. 31; Luke IX. 22. Vol. I. ix. § lxxxix.) SECT. XCII.

LUKE IX. 44. Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men [and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.] [MARK IX.—31. MAT. XVII.—22, 23.]

And he *said unto them*, with great solemnity, *Apply your ears* attentively *to these sayings*,[b] how disagreeable soever they may be, and let them sink into your hearts; *for the Son of man*, instead of reigning in that grandeur which you expect, *shall* very *shortly be betrayed into the hands of* sinful *men*,[c] *and* shall seem for a while to be a helpless prey to their rage; for *they shall put him to death* in a most cruel and infamous manner; *but* they shall not finally triumph over him; for *after he is* thus *slain*, *he shall rise* from the dead *on the third day*, according to the intimations I have often given you (See Vol. I. p. 144, 347, 478.) Luke IX. 44.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying, [and were exceeding sorry.] [MAT. XVII.—23. MARK IX. 32.]

But they were so strongly prepossessed with the expectation of a temporal kingdom, that they *understood not this saying*, plain as it was, *and* the sense of *it was hid from them*, *so that they perceived it not*; foolishly imagining it inconsistent with what the sacred oracles had declared of the glorious success of the Son of man, and the universal empire he was to establish, (Dan. vii. 14.) *And yet they were afraid to ask him* what was the meaning *of that saying*, lest he should upbraid them as unteachable; considering how lately he had given them the like warning before, and how severely he had rebuked Peter for endeavouring to dissuade him from it (§ lxxxix;) nevertheless, they perceived that their Master foretold his own death; *and were exceeding sorry* that a person of so excellent and amiable a character, from whom 45

mentioned by Matthew, refers to the short stay they made in the places where they lodged; and indeed he could not so conveniently speak to all the twelve while they were actually travelling.

[b] *Apply your ears to these sayings.*] This seems to me a just translation of θεσθε ὑμεις εις τα ωτα ὑμων τους λογους τουτους, which is literally, *Put these sayings to your ears*; a phrase which our language will hardly admit. It intimates the propensity they had to withdraw and turn away their ears from such declarations as he was now about to make.

[c] *Shall shortly be betrayed, &c.*] Mark has expressed it in the present tense, and says, *The Son of man is delivered*; but nothing is more common in the sacred language than to speak of what should certainly and quickly be, as if it was already done. Compare John xii. 31; xvii. 4. 11, 24; Eph. ii. 5, 6; Heb. xii. 22; and Rev. xviii. 2, 4.—The explication of many other scriptures depends on this obvious remark.

SECT. XCII. they had entertained such glorious expectations, should meet with so unworthy a return.

Mat. xvii. 24 *And* soon after this, *he came* with his disciples *to Capernaum: and when they were come to Capernaum, the* receivers and *collectors of the* sacred *tribute*,[d] which was gathered every year through all their cities, *came to Peter, and said, Does not your Master*, who has the character of so religious a Teacher, *pay the* usual *tribute* of the didrachma,[e] or half-shekel, to the service
25 of the temple? And *he says, Yes*, I know that he uses to pay it, and make no doubt but he will do it now. *And when he came into the house, Jesus*, who was there before, *prevented him*, before he could speak of the affair in ques-tion, *and said* to him, *What dost thou think, Simon*, and what seems fit to thee on this occasion? *Of whom do the kings of the earth receive custom or tribute? of their own sons or of stran-*
26 *gers? Peter says to him*, Lord, it is evident they receive it only *of strangers. Jesus said to him, Then the sons*, by virtue of their father's dispensation, *are free* from the obligation: and, on the like principle, I, as the Son of God, might plead an exemption here, especially as I have not now the sum which is required towards the maintenance of the temple
27 worship. *Nevertheless, lest we should offend them*, by giving an occasion to imagine that I put any slight on the temple, or lest others from my example should in far different circumstances omit this contribution, I will not debate the matter, but rather work a miracle than fail in the payment. *Go* therefore *to the sea, and* when thou comest to the neighbouring shore, *throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and*

MAT. XVII. 24. And [he came to Capernaum: and] when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute? [MARK IX.—33.]

25 He saith, Yes, And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up: and when

[d] *The collectors of the* sacred *tribute.*] Josephus has expressly asserted, that each of the Jews used yearly to pay a didrachma, or half-shekel, the piece of money here mentioned, to the service of the temple: (see Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 9. [al. 12.] § 1.) A custom which probably took its rise from the demand of that sum from each of the Israelites, whenever they were numbered; Exod. xxx. 13. And therefore, with Beza, Casaubon, Hammond, Grotius, and many other great critics, I choose to understand this passage as referring to that, rather than to any civil tax; chiefly because I think, notwithstanding what Salmasius says to the contrary, (against Milton, p. 259,) our Lord's argument, ver. 25, 26, can otherwise have no force. —The reader will find an excellent note in Grotius here, which renders it unnecessary to enlarge any farther.

[e] *Does not your master pay the* usual *tribute*, &c.] It seems then to have been a voluntary thing, which *custom* rather than *law* had established. In Nehemiah's days it was accounted so, and the sum was then something lower. See Neh. x. 32.

thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt there *find* a piece of silver coin, called *a stater*, which it has just swallowed;[f] *take that, and give* it to *them* that collect the tribute, both *for me and thee*; for thou knowest it will answer their demands for both. Accordingly Peter went, and having caught a fish, he found the money in its mouth, and presently returned and paid it according to his Lord's command.

SECT. XCII. Mat. XVII. 27

IMPROVEMENT.

How slow and untractable were the minds of the apostles, who *understood not* these plain things, when thus inculcated again and again! But, on the other hand, how much integrity does it shew in the historian, to record what seemed so little to the honour of himself and his brethren! In this respect, and many others, surely credit rises to the gospel, even by occasion of the *infirmities* of those to whom it was committed, and *out of weakness they are made strong*.—The lenity of our blessed Lord was truly admirable, that he should bear such *stupidity* in his *disciples* with so much gentleness and patience, and should, with so much earnestness, go on to *renew his instructions* to them. Let us, however, learn to be upon our guard against the prejudices of worldly interest, since, as we see, they may take such strong hold of minds, in the main upright and pious. And therefore let us earnestly pray, that God would give us a greater relish for spiritual and eternal blessings.

Mark IX. 32

Luke IX. 44

It cannot surely become us, to seek the grandeur and riches of this world, when our *blessed Master* was so *poor*, that he could not pay this *little tribute*, without having recourse to a *miracle*. Yet this he chooses, rather than to *give offence* by a refusal, how justly soever he might have pleaded an *exemption* from it. Let us learn from hence that *meekness of wisdom*, which will teach us to seek the interest of others rather than our own; and to

Mat. XVII. 27

26

[f] *A stater*, which it has just swallowed.] The *stater* was (as appears in part from this text,) a piece of coin, in value about *two half shekels*, or, according to Dr Prideaux, near *three shillings* of our money, though most critics reckon the *shekel* but about *half-a-crown*. (See Drusius on this verse and the 24th.)—I see no reason, with Schmidius, to suppose this piece of money was created on this occasion: but supposing, as in the paraphrase, that the fish had accidentally swallowed it (perhaps as it was falling into the water, near some other prey), I cannot forbear remarking, how illustrious a degree of knowledge and power our Lord discovered in the case before us; knowledge, in penetrating into the bowels of this animal, though in the sea; and power, in directing this particular fish to Peter's hook, though he himself was at a distance. Hardly any circumstance can be imagined more fit to encourage him and his brethren in a firm dependence on Divine Providence. And it is very natural to reflect, how easily Christ could, if he had seen fit, have drawn up immense treasures, by this very method, from the heart of the sea: but he intended, that his servants should be enriched and adorned in a much nobler manner, than with pearls and costly array.

SECT. XCII. consider how we may edify others by the abundance of our good works, rather than how we may excuse ourselves in the omission of any. That extent of *knowledge* and *power* which our Lord displayed on this occasion, can never be at a loss for means to repay, whatever we may thus sacrifice for his sake.

SECT. XCIII.

Christ reproves his apostles for their contention who should be greatest; and recommends to them humility and mortification. Mark IX.—33—37—42—*to the end.* Mat. XVIII. 1—9. Luke IX. 46—48.

MARK IX. 33.

SECT. XCIII. Mark IX. 33 NOW when Peter was returned from the sea-side, and had paid the tribute money with which the fish had supplied him,[a] our Lord, from a late occurrence which he had observed among his disciples, took occasion to recommend humility to them: *and being in the house* with his apostles, that he might naturally introduce the discourse he intended, *he asked them, About what were you disputing with each other on the way* in so eager a manner, that I could not forbear taking particular notice of it?

MARK IX.—33. AND being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 *But,* instead of answering him directly, *they were* confounded with the question, and continued *silent,* being ashamed to confess the truth; *for* as they were travelling *on the way, a controversy arose among them,* [*and*] *they had* warmly *debated* the matter *one with another, which of them should be* the *greatest* man in that temporal monarchy, which they assured themselves that Jesus, as the expected Messiah, would erect, whatever sufferings might lie in the passage to it.

34 But they held their peace: for by the way [there arose a reasoning among them, *and*] they had disputed among themselves, [which of them should be greatest.] [LUKE IX. 46.]

35 *And Jesus perceiving,* notwithstanding their silence, *the* secret *thought of their* ambitious *heart,* and observing the same carnality and emulation to be still working there, *when he was sat down,*

35 And [Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart,] sat down, and called the

[a] When Peter was returned, &c.] In order to remind those who may hear these sections read in a family, of the connection of them, I have generally introduced each, with a brief hint at the subject of the former; which, though it makes the paraphrase on the first verse of a section sometimes much longer than I should otherwise have chosen, yet I hope it may be attended with advantage sufficient to balance that inconvenience.

SECT. XCIII.

Mark IX. 35

twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. [LUKE IX. 47.] *called* all *the twelve* about him,[b] *and says unto them* with great seriousness and earnestness, It is humility that is the way to honour in my kingdom; and therefore *if any one would be chief* there, *let him*, in all the offices of condescending friendship to his brethren, *be* as *the last of all, and the servant of all.*

Mat. XVIII.

MAT. XVIII. 1. At the same time, came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Now *at the same time*,[c] when *the disciples* were thus called, they *came to Jesus*, and finding that he knew the subject of their late debate, some of them at length took the liberty of *saying*, Lord, decide this question, and tell us plainly, *who is* intended to be *the greatest in the kingdom of heaven*, and to whom wilt thou commit the chief management of affairs in it?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and [took and] set him [LUKE, by him] in the midst of them, [and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,] [MARK IX. 36. LUKE IX.—47.] *And*, when he had answered the inquiry in the manner related above, *Jesus*, in order to impress the important maxim yet deeper on their minds, *having called to him a little child* that happened then to be in the house where they lodged, *took and set him by him in the midst of them; and taking him* up, and embracing him *in his* gracious *arms*, in token of his tender regard, *he said unto them, I assuredly* 3 *declare* it *to you* as a most solemn and important truth, That *except ye be converted* and turned from these ambitious and carnal views, *and become like little children* in lowliness and meekness, in a candid teachable temper, and an indifference to the great things of the present life, (Psal. cxxxi. 1, 2.) you will be so far from having any distinguished rank among my subjects, that *ye shall by no means* so much as *enter* at all *into the kingdom of heaven*, or be entitled to any of its final blessings. *Whoever therefore* 4

3 Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever there-

[b] *Called* all *the twelve* about him.] It is natural to suppose, that *twelve* persons travelling together on foot would form themselves into two or three little companies, while some of them, no doubt, would be attending Christ, and discoursing with him: but our Lord judged it proper, as he was now in the house, that all the twelve should hear this admonition, though they might not all have been engaged in the dispute which occasioned it.

[c] *At the same time.*] By these words Matthew expressly fixes the connection between this story, and that which concluded his xviith chapter. But Clarius seems to refine too much, when he supposes, that Christ's having thus miraculously provided for paying Peter's tribute with his own, gave umbrage to the rest: yet this precarious turn serves the church of Rome as an argument for the supremacy of the Pope; nor is it wonderful, that in so weak a cause they should catch at such a shadow.

SECT. XCIII. MAT. XVIII. 4

shall humble himself even *as this little child,* and act with such candour, simplicity, and modesty, as you see in him, *He is* the person that hereafter will be regarded as *the greatest in the kingdom of heaven*, and will stand high in its final glories. *And whosoever* cordially *shall entertain this child* [*or*] shall discover an affectionate regard to any *one of such little children, in my name*, and for my sake, as one whom I love, and recommend to his care, *entertaineth me;* for I shall take the kindness as done to myself: *and* I would have you to remember, that it shall not terminate even there, but (as I have formerly told you, Mat. x. 40, Vol. I. p. 421.) *whoever* thus *shall entertain* and shew a regard to *me, entertains not me* alone, *but him that sent me,*[d] even my heavenly Father, who is honoured or affronted as I am respected or slighted. And this regard to the meanest of my servants, I must urge upon you, as of the utmost importance; *for* (as I just now told you,) *he that* by such a condescension *is* as the *least among you all, He shall be* eminently *great* in my esteem, and be distinguished by peculiar marks of the divine favour. *But whoever shall* deliberately do any thing to *offend*, and to occasion the fall of *one of these little ones who believe in me*,[e] or of any disciple of mine, though he may seem as weak as this infant, will expose himself thereby to such guilt and punishment, that *it were better for him* he should undergo the most certain and terrible destruction one can imagine, even *that a* huge *mill-stone*[f] *should be hanged about his neck, and he should* thus *be thrown* headlong *into the sea*,[g] [*and*] there be *drowned in the depth of it.*

fore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And [LUKE, whosoever shall receive this child,] [*or* one of such] little [children] in my name, receiveth me; [and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me:] [LUKE, for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.] [MARK IX. 37. LUKE IX. 48.]

6 But [whosoever] shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were [cast into the sea, *and*] drowned in the depth of the sea. [MARK IX. 42.]

[d] *Entertains not me* alone, *but him that sent me.*] Here Christ was interrupted by a speech of John, related Mark ix. 38—41, which is paraphrased and explained below, in § xcvi. where I have accounted in note [a] for placing it apart.

[e] *Shall offend one of these little ones*, &c.] To *offend* a person generally signifies, (as was observed before, Vol. I. p. 221, note [c],) *laying a stumbling block in his way;* so that any who should by a scandalous life lead others to think ill of the Christian profession in general, or should by persecution discourage the weak, or by sophistry, bad example, or otherwise, pervert them from the way of truth and goodness, would fall under the weight of this terrible sentence.

[f] *A huge mill-stone.*] So I render μυλος ονικος, which (as Erasmus, Grotius, Raphelius, and many others observe,) properly signifies *a mill-stone* too large to be turned, as some were, by the hand and requiring the force of asses to move it; as it seems those animals were generally used by the Jews on this occasion. See Raphel. Annot. ex Xen. p. 46.

[g] *Thrown* headlong *into the sea.*] Ca-

SECT. XCIII.

Mat. XVIII. 7.

7 Woe unto the world because of offences: for it must needs be, that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.

Wo unto the world, because of such *offences*, or scandals as these; *for* they will bring upon it the most dreadful judgments: indeed, considering the corruption and weakness of mankind, and the various temptations with which they are surrounded, *it is*, humanly speaking, *necessary*, or unavoidable, *that offences come; but* I may well say, *Wo to that man by whom the offence cometh*, whoever he be, that by avarice, ambition, or any other vicious affection, lays a stumbling-block in mens way, and makes himself accessary to the ruin of immortal souls, tempting them either to renounce or to despise the gospel; for the time will come when he shall bitterly repent it.

8 —Wherefore, if thy hand offend thee, [cut it off,] and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life—maimed, rather than having two hands, [to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:][MARK IX. 43.]

8 *Wherefore* let me renew the exhortation which I formerly gave you, Rather to submit to the severest mortifications, than to indulge your sinful inclinations, to the scandal of others, and to your own ruin: and, as I then told you in my sermon on the mount,[h] (see on Mat. v. 30, Vol. I. p. 221.) *If thy* right *hand offend thee*, that is, if any thing dear unto thee as a right hand should be the means of leading thee into sin, rather than indulge it, *cut it off, and cast* [*it*] *from thee*, whatever pain or deformity, or other detriment might follow from such a loss; for *it is* much *better for thee to enter maimed into* eternal *life, than having two hands to go* down *into* the prison of *hell*, even *into that fire which shall never be extinguished: Where their* corroding and upbraiding consciences is as a *worm*, which *dieth not*,[i] but, with unutterable anguish, still gnaws

MARK IX. 44. Where their worm dieth not, and the

Mark IX. 44.

saubon and Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 85.) not to mention others, have shewn at large, that *drowning in the sea* was a punishment frequently used among the ancients, and that the persons condemned had sometimes heavy stones tied about their necks, or were rolled up in sheets of lead. It seems to have grown into a proverb for dreadful and inevitable ruin.

[h] As I told you in my sermon on the mount.] It will, I hope, be observed, that Matthew, who had before so largely recorded that sermon, gives us again this passage of it on the present occasion; which is one proof among many others, that our Lord did not think it improper or unnecessary, sometimes to repeat what he had then said: (see Vol. I. p. 251, note [e].) And, considering the importance of these maxims, and how little many of his hearers were disposed to receive and retain them, it was a valuable instance of his compassion and wisdom.

[i] *Where their*—conscience is as a *worm* which *dieth not.*] There may indeed be an allusion here to Isa. lxvi. 24. (compare Ecclus. vii. 17, and Judith xvi. 17;) but the expression had been just and proper without it: and it is observable, that some of the ancients expressed the same thought by saying, that *the marrow of the back-bone* did, in a wicked man, *turn into a* huge and fierce *serpent*: thereby intimating, (by a much finer figure, than Ælian, who reports it, understood,)

SECT. XCIII. Mark IX. 44.

upon the heart; *and* where *the fire* of divine wrath, which shall penetrate into the very soul of the sinner, *is not*, and shall not be *quenched* throughout all the endless ages of eternity.

fire is not quenched.

And again, *if thy foot offend thee, cut it off*

45 with as much resolution as thou wouldest part with a gangrened member for the preservation of thy life; for something yet more important is here concerned, and *it is better for thee to enter lame into* the regions of eternal *life* and blessedness, though thou wast ever to continue so,[k] *than having two feet to be cast into the in-*

46 *extinguishable fire of hell; Where their tormenting worm dieth not, and* where *the fire is not quenched*, nor the violence of its heat abated through all the ages of eternity.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; [Mat. XVIII.—8.]

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 *And*, to repeat so wholesome and necessary an admonition a third time, *If thine eye offend thee*, or would necessarily be the means of leading thee into sin, choose rather with thine own hands to *tear it out* of its socket, *and* to *cast it away from thee* as an abhorred thing, than, by complying with the temptation, to hazard thy far more precious soul; for *it is* far *better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God*, [*or*] *into* everlasting *life* and blessedness, *with* but *one eye*,

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, [and cast *it* from thee:] it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God, [*or* into life,] with one eye,

that their own *thought* should be their *torment*, and they should be unable to disarm it by those artifices which had prevailed in the present life; see Ælian. Hist. Anim. lib. i. cap. 51, and Gataker, Antonin. lib. viii. § 58.—Since the first edition of this work I have met with an explication of these words in Dr. Rymer's Representation of Revealed Religion, p. 155, so new to me, and at the same time so considerable, that I could not forbear mentioning it. He supposes, that both *the worm* and *the fire* are meant of *the body*, and refer to the two different ways of funeral among the ancients, interment and burning. So that our Lord may seem here to prevent an objection against the permanent misery of the wicked in hell, arising from the frail constitution of the body; as if he should have said, "The body will not then be as it is at "present, but will be incapable of con-"sumption or dissolution. In its natur-"al state, *the worms* may devour the "whole, and die for want of nourish-"ment; *the fire* may consume it, and be "extinguished for want of fuel. But "*there* shall be *perpetual food* for *the worm* "that corrodes it, *perpetual fuel* for *the* "*fire* that torments it." The words of the Apocryphal writer above mentioned, Judith xvi. 17. greatly illustrate this interpretation; where it is said, *The Lord Almighty will take vengeance on* the wicked *in the day of judgment, putting fire and worms into their flesh, and they shall feel them, and weep for ever.*

[k] Though thou wast ever to continue so.] It is certain, no man will *enter into life halt, maimed*, or *blind*, as the bodies of the saints will be restored in the greatest perfection. I know indeed, that, with some latitude in the expression, he may be said to *enter halt*, or *maimed, into life*, whose spirit passes from a *dismembered body* into the regions of the blessed; but it seems to me, that the propriety of the phrase is most exactly preserved, by taking it as in the paraphrase, and the spirit of the thought is greatly increased by that interpretation.

[rather] than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire: [MAT. XVIII. 9.]

even though the other were not to be restored at the resurrection, but the blemish were to continue for ever, *than having two eyes*, and all the other members of the body in the greatest perfection, *to be cast into hell*, where they will all be full of unutterable anguish, being tormented with everlasting *fire*. In that dreadful prison of divine vengeance, *where* (as I have told you again and again) *their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched* nor abated, but preys perpetually on the miserable sinner that is condemned to it. *For* as the flesh burnt on the altar has salt rubbed upon it, in consequence of which it burns so much the more fiercely, so *every one* of those unhappy creatures, the victims of divine justice, *shall be* (as it were) *salted with fire*;[l] *and*, instead of being consumed by it, shall, in those wretched abodes, continue immortal in the midst of their flames; whereas *every* acceptable *sacrifice shall be seasoned with* another kind of *salt*,[m] even that of divine grace, which purifies the soul, and preserves it from corruption.

SECT. XCIII. Mark IX. 47.

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

48

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

49

In allusion to this, you, my disciples, may remember, I have formerly called you the salt of

[l] *Shall be salted with fire.*] Grotius, Spanheim, Gataker, Le Clerc, and Dr. Mill, have abundantly answered the favourite criticism of Scaliger, by which he would here read πυρια instead of πυρι, that it might be rendered, *Every offering made by fire shall be salted.*—The learned and laborious Wolfius has proposed a multitude of interpretations on this text. He and Mons. L'Enfant think it refers to the *fiery trial* through which Christians must expect to pass: but this neither seems a natural sense of the phrase itself, nor does it so well suit the context, by which it should seem to be a reason why the *infernal fire is never quenched.* I know it may be answered, that it is however a reason why the disciples should practise the mortification required above; but it seems desirable, where it can be done, to interpret the particles in their most usual sense, though sometimes it is necessary (as we have elsewhere observed, Vol. I. page 285, note i.) to recede from it.—To suppose, as Dr. Clarke and some others do, that here is a reference to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word נמלח, which signifies either *to be salted* or *consumed*, seems very unwarrantable; since αλισθησεται has no such ambiguity; not to say how much it would impair the force of the sentence, leading to an idea, the very contrary to what Christ had suggested above, no less than *three times.*

[m] *Every sacrifice shall be seasoned with salt.*] It is well known, that the Mosaic law required this. See Lev. ii. 13.—Heinsius thinks, that as *salt* contracts and binds, it was therefore used as an *emblem of friendship*, which he supposes our Lord afterwards to refer to; and that it was the foundation of the *figure* by which *a perpetual engagement* is called *a covenant of salt*; Numb. xviii. 19. I should rather think it intended as a circumstance of decency, that the meat of God's table should be salted; and conclude that, if it had any emblematical meaning, it was to recommend to the worshipper an incorrupt heart, seasoned with savoury sentiments of wisdom and piety.—Sinners are elsewhere represented as the victims of divine justice: (Isa. xxxiv. 6; Jer. xii. 3; xlvi. 10; Ezek. xxi. 9, 10; and xxxix. 17.) And good men (as in the end of this verse.) are represented in another view, with regard to their consecration to God, as acceptable sacrifices. Rom. xii. 1; xv. 16. Compare 1 Pet. ii. 5.

SECT. XCIII

the earth; (Mat. v. 13. Vol. I. p. 212.) and, as *salt is* a very *good* thing, so will you, if you answer that character, be inestimable blessings to the world, by purifying and preserving it from corruption, and diffusing the savour of that knowledge and grace with which you are seasoned: *but*, as I added then, *if the salt* itself *be grown insipid, with what will you season it?* or what can restore you, if you are corrupted, who should be the means of curing or restoring others? See to it, therefore, that you *have* this excellent *salt in yourselves; and*, as one instance of it, be careful to *maintain peace with each other*, and do not give way to those very unbecoming disputes and emulations which have been the occasion of my present discourse.

Mark IX. 50

50 Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xviii. 1

How deeply is *pride* rooted in the heart of fallen man; when neither the daily instructions, nor edifying example of the humble Jesus could prevent it from appearing, even among the apostles themselves, in so mean and unworthy a manner! Still did worldly interest and grandeur so intoxicate their minds, that they seemed even *against hope* to have *hoped* for it, and to have found out a strange kind of method of grafting these expectations, even on the very *cross* of Christ, which was intended to destroy them.

Mark ix. 36

How edifying and affecting are these lessons, which the meek and lowly *Redeemer* gave us, with this *little child in his arms*, whose example we are required to copy! Lord, give us of thy *regenerating grace*, that we may do it; that we may *be converted, and become as little children*, free from avarice and ambition, malice and prejudice! How melancholy is it to think, that many, who have by their *office* been employed to read and explain this lesson to others, and who have not been *children in understanding*, seem to have learnt so little of it themselves, as if it had never been at all intended for that order of men, to whom indeed it was immediately addressed! If there be any such yet remaining in the *Christian ministry*, let them seriously weigh the *woe* denounced on *that man by whom the offence cometh.* May the infinite mercies of God be extended to all professing Christians who give themselves up to worldly pursuits and projects; and especially to those who make the *church of Christ* only a kind of *porch* to the *temple* of *mammon*, and the *sacred office* itself merely a convenient vehicle for swallowing down riches and honours! May divine grace deliver us from such fatal snares, and form us to that

Mat. xviii. 3

7

self-denial and *mortification*, without which we cannot be the true *disciples of Christ*; but, after having *pierced* ourselves *through with many* unnecessary *sorrows* here, shall plunge ourselves deep into eternal perdition! SECT. XCIII.

May these repeated and dreadful representations of *future misery*, which we have now been reading, impress our souls in a becoming manner! Blessed *Jesus!* thou bringest *good tidings*; yet which of the *prophets* under the legal dispensation ever represented *the terrors of the Lord* in so awful a light as that in which thou hast placed them! Let none of thy *ministers* be afraid to imitate thee herein! nor let any of thy *followers* presume to censure them for it! May we all be effectually *warned to flee from the wrath to come*; and, as we would not another day be *salted with fire*, may our hearts now be *seasoned with thy grace!* and may we, by a modest and *peaceful*, a benevolent and useful life, be daily bearing a testimony to it, and, as *the salt of the earth*, may we be labouring to cure the growing corruption of the world about us! Mark ix. 43—48. 49 50

SECT. XCIV.

Our Lord farther enforces condescension and humility, and gives rules for the accommodation of disputes and offences among Christians. Mat. XVIII. 10—20.

MAT. XVIII. 10.

TAKE heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

MAT. XVIII. 10.

FARTHER to promote the humility and moderation of his disciples, our Lord proceeded in the discourse which he began (as in the former section,) with the little child in his arms, and said, *Take* special *heed that you despise not one of these little ones*, or that you do not cast contempt on the weakest and meanest of my servants, nor slight even the soul of a child; *for I say unto you, that their* attendant *angels*, while *in heaven, do incessantly behold the face of my heavenly Father*;[a] and if the highest courtiers SECT. XCIV. Mat. XVIII. 10

[a] *Their* attendant *angels* while *in heaven*, &c.] The fathers looked on this as an argument that each good man has his particular *guardian angel:* (see Suicer, Thesaur. Vol. I. p. 43.) And Grotius also seems to allow the force of it. I apprehend this passage rather intimates, that the angels, who sometimes attend the little *ones* spoken of, at other times stand in God's immediate presence; and consequently that different angels are at different times employed in this kind office, if it be incessantly performed. The general sense is plain, that the highest angels do not disdain, on proper occasions, to perform services of protection and friendship for the meanest Christian; but, as St. Paul says they are *all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation:* (Heb. i. 14.) I say,

SECT. XCIV.

Mat. XVIII.

in the world above do not disdain, on proper occasions, to minister unto them, much less should we disdain it. Especially when you consider how much greater an instance of condescension you have continually before you, that it is possible even the angels should give; *for the Son of man* himself[b] that great and illustrious Personage, *came* not, as many have imagined, to reign and triumph upon earth, but by all the offices of humility and endearment *to save that which was lost* and undone; and he takes a gracious and constant oversight of the least, as well as the greatest, of his redeemed ones. (Compare Luke xix. 10, sect. cxliii.)

11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

12 *What do you think* would be the conduct of a faithful shepherd? *If a man had* a flock of *an hundred sheep, and* but *one of them should wander* from the rest, *would he not leave the ninety-nine* in their pasture or fold *on the mountains,*[c] *and go out* with the most solicitous care and labour *to seek that which is gone astray? And if he happen to find it, I assuredly say unto you, that* he will bring it back with greater pleasure, and the recovery of *it will give him* a *more* sensible *joy, than* the safety of *the ninety-nine which had not wandered* at all. (Compare Luke xv. 4, 5, sect. cxxii.) *Even so* the love and tenderness of God for those who are regarded by him as his children is such, that you may be assured, *it is not the will of your heavenly Father that* any *one of these little ones should be lost,* for want of your care in attending it, or through your negligence in seeking its recovery.

12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 *And*, as in order to the recovery of your weaker brethren, admonition will frequently be necessary, let me lay down a rule, which, when larger societies are formed among you, it will be of great importance to attend to with the utmost care: *If* thou shalt know *thy brother* to

15 Moreover, if thy brother shall tres-

the highest; because *to behold the face of God* may signify *waiting near his throne*, and be an allusion to the office of chief ministers in earthly courts, who daily converse with their princes. See Grotius; and compare 2 Sam. xvi. 19; 1 Kings xii. 6; Esth. i. 14; and Luke i. 19.

[b] *For the Son of man* himself.] The particle *for* here introduces another reason to enforce the caution not to despise these little *ones*, and not a *proof* of *their angels beholding God's face*. See note [d] on Luke xi. 36. Vol. I. p. 352.

[c] *Leave the ninety-nine on the mountains.*] The original will bear either this construction, or that which is given in our common translation; but I have rather chosen to express it thus, as most agreeable to what we find in Luke, chap. xv. 4, sect. cxxii.

pass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

be guilty of a fault, and he shall *sin against thee,* SECT. XCIV.
go and reprove him in the most convincing, yet
the most gentle manner that thou canst;[d] and Mat.
that he may take it the better, let it be done *be-* XVIII.
tween thee and him alone: if he will hear thee 15
with due regard, it is well, for by this means
thou hast gained thy brother; he will return
to the way of his duty, and the friendship be-
tween you will thus be established on firmer
foundations than ever, in consequence of this
substantial token of thy impartial sincerity and
frankness of temper. (Compare Prov. xxviii.

16 But if he will not hear *thee, then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

23.) *But if he will not hearken* [*to thee,*] *take* 16
with thee one or two more, who are persons of
character and reputation in the society, *that*
their presence may add greater weight to the
admonition given, and may be of service, either
to silence his objections, and bring him to a
sense of his fault, or to prevent disputes, and
justify thy conduct, if the matter should be
carried farther; as *in the mouth of two or three*
witnesses every word may be established more
effectually than it could otherwise have been.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the

(See Deut. xix. 15.) *But if he* shall be still in- 17
corrigible in his fault, and *disregard them* in
the advice they offer him for peace, then *tell*
it to the whole *church,*[e] or society of worship-

[d] *Reprove him* in the most convincing manner that thou canst.] The word ἔλεγξον signifies to *convince* as well as to *admonish.* Compare John viii. 9, 46; xvi. 8; 1 Cor. xiv. 24; Tit. i. 9; and James ii. 9.—The reader will observe, I often choose to give the full force of a word in the paraphrase, rather than greatly to increase the number of words in the version, though so increased they might express no more than is expressed in a single word or two in the Greek.

[e] *Tell it the* whole *church.*] This is one of those many scriptures which would have been very intelligible, if they had not been learnedly obscured by ingenious men, whose interest it has been to spread a cloud over them. I am more and more convinced, that the vulgar sense of the New Testament, that is, the sense in which an honest man of plain sense would take it on his first reading the original, or any good translation, is almost every where the true general sense of any passage; though an acquaintance with language and antiquity, with an attentive meditation on the text and context, may illustrate the spirit and energy of a multitude of places, in a manner which could not otherwise be learned. The old English editions of 1539 and 1541 render it, *Tell it to the congregation;* and, I think, properly enough.—The word *church* is unhappily grown into a term of art, and has by different persons a variety of secondary ideas annexed to it; as Dr Watts has beautifully shewn in his Essays on Uncharitableness, p. 7—10. But it signifies in general an assembly, or number of people, called together on whatever occasion, as is well known. (Compare Acts xix. 32. 39.) It is in the New Testament generally used, as here, for *a particular assembly;* (Acts xiv. 23; 1 Cor. iv. 17; xiv. 23; xvi. 19.) but sometimes it is used for the whole body of Christians, because they are now called out from the world, and are at last to be gathered together in the presence of Christ their head, (2 Thes. ii. 1.) and to dwell for ever with each other, and with him. (1 Thes. iv. 17.) Compare Mat. xvi. 18; Eph. i. 22; iii. 10; v. 24; and

SECT. XCIV. Mat. XVIII.

ping Christians to which he belongs, and among whom he has immediate communion in gospel ordinances; *and if* they concur in any admonition to the offender, and *he* be so far hardened

church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.

17 as to *disregard the* whole *church*, or society of Christians, you have then done your utmost to reclaim him; and while he continues in this obstinate temper, you will do well to enter your protest against it, by forbearing any intimate friendship with such a person; and *let him* therefore in this case *be to thee* even *as a heathen, and a publican*, or other most notorious sinner,[f] to whom you would perform only the common offices of humanity, but would avoid his intimate society as scandalous, and to whom you are not under those peculiar obligations whereby Christian brethren are bound to each other.

18 These are the maxims which you, my apostles, are to inculcate on my other followers, and let them see to it, that they duly regard you; for *verily I say unto you*, You shall be furnished with such divine illumination and assistance, as shall abundantly confirm the authority of your decisions on every case and question which may occur; and fully prove (as I formerly told you) that *whatsoever you shall bind*, even in this course of your humble ministry, *on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.* (See note [h] on Mat. xvi. 19, Vol I. p. 485.)

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 And *further*, as a convincing token and de-

19 Again I say

Col. i. 18, 24.—According to Bishop Stillingfleet's interpretation of this text (in his Irenicum, book ii. cap. 5, § 8,) it should be rendered, *Tell it to an assembly*, or a select company. But it is certain, the force of the *article* is better preserved by our version; and as undoubtedly it must be an assembly of Christians, (compare 1 Cor. vi. 1.) so no interpretation seems so natural, as that it should be *that assembly* which was under a peculiar obligation to watch over the person in question, (compare 1 Cor. v. 12, 13, and 2 Thes. iii. 14, 15,) and *that*, whose advices and remonstrances he was peculiarly obliged to hear. And this was likewise conformable to the usage of the Jews, who admonished offenders in their synagogues, and to many of their maxims, which commentators mention on this text. See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. in loc. and Selden de Syned. lib. 1. cap. 9.

[f] *As a heathen and a publican*, or other most notorious sinner.] If I am not much mistaken, that celebrated text in Titus relating to heretics, (chap. iii. 10,) which requires that a man who disturbs the peace, or subverts the faith of his Christian brethren, should be *twice admonished*, and then discarded by the society, may be much illustrated by this passage. When such a case occurs, (as well as when an offended brother has just cause of complaint,) each particular person concerned must judge as well as he can; remembering he is answerable to Christ for the impartiality of such judgment.

unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

monstration of this, *I say unto you, That* this authority and power not only shall attend the actions of your whole united body, but even *if* any *two of you shall agree together* here *on earth*,[g] *concerning any thing which they shall* think it proper to *ask* in prayer, for the miraculous confirmation of any of their determinations, *it shall be* immediately *done for them by my Father in heaven.*[h] SECT. XCIV. Mat. XVIII. 19

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

For where but *two or three* 20. *are assembled in my name*, with a regard to my authority, and to the purposes of my glory, whatever the peculiar occasion be, *I am there*, by my special, though invisible presence, *in the midst of them*, and will shew, by all proper interposition of my divine power, the regard I have to their interest and their prayers.

IMPROVEMENT.

THUS happy are the *meanest servants of Christ*, in the care and favour of their *heavenly Master*, and in the *angelic guard*, which, by his high command, are continually attending even the *lambs of his flock*. So condescending are the *blessed spirits* above, that even the *greatest* of them do not disdain *to minister unto the heirs of salvation:* (Heb. i. 14.) Let not the wisest and greatest men *despise* those, whom *angels* honour with their guardianship and care; especially since *the Son of man*, that merciful *Shepherd*, has come forth into this *wilderness* to save *that which was lost*, and even to *seek* and recover us when we were *gone astray*, and should otherwise have wandered on to our eternal ruin. Ver. 10. 11, 12

What could have been more happy for the *church of Christ*, than the observation of this plain and easy *rule*, which he has given for ending *disputes* among his followers! And yet who, that sees the conduct of the generality of Christians, would imagine they had ever heard of such a rule? Instead of this *private expostulation*, which might often bring a debate to a speedy and amicable conclusion, what *public charges!* what passionate complaints! what frequent and laboured attempts to take, if the least scandalous, yet not the least pernicious kind of *revenge*, 15, 16

[g] *If* any *two of you shall agree together* here *on earth.*] The text so expressly refers to *agreeing in a petition*, that I wonder the learned and judicious editors of the Prussian Testament should render it, *If any two of you shall live on earth in a good understanding with each other.* Perhaps there may be a reference to the notion the Jews had, that it was necessary at least *ten* should concur in *social prayer*, if any extraordinary success was expected. See Trigland. de Secta Karæorum, cap. x, p. 172.

[h] *It shall be done for them*, &c.] That this refers to a *miraculous answer of prayer*, may appear from comparing Mat xxi. 21, 22; Mark xi. 23, 24; John xiv. 13, 14; 1 John iii. 22; v. 14, 15; and Jam. v. 16. See Tillotson's Works, Vol. III. page 307.

SECT. XCIV. by wounding the characters of those whom we imagine to have injured us!

Ver. 17. As for *church-censures*, how lamentable is it, that they have been so little conformable to *this rule*, and in many instances so contrary to it, in almost every Christian nation under heaven! Is this the form in which *ecclesiastical judgments* do appear in the popish, or even in the protestant world? Are these the maxims by which they have been, or by which they are determined, even by those who claim the largest share in the promises made to the apostles, and boast with the greatest confidence of the presence and authority of *Christ* with them, to confirm their sentences and to sanctify, perhaps, rapine and murder? Vain wretched confidence! Let us earnestly pray that this dishonour to the Christian name may every where be wiped away; and that true religion, and even common humanity, may not with such solemn *mockery* be destroyed *in the name of the Lord.*

18 Let humble submission be always paid to *apostolical decisions* in every difficulty; and let the *promises* made to these leaders in the *Christian church*, be some encouragement even to us, *on whom the ends of the world are come.* None but an Omnipresent, and consequently a Divine Person, could say, *Wherever*
20 *two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* His power and his goodness can never be impaired: let it therefore be an encouragement to *social prayer:* and let the remembrance of *our Redeemer*'s continued presence and inspection, engage us to behave ourselves agreeably to the relation that we claim to him, and to those expectations from him which we profess.

SECT. XCV.

Our Lord cautions his disciples against a revengeful spirit, and inculcates mutual forgiveness, by the affecting parable of the unmerciful servant. Mat. XVIII. 21, *to the end.*

MAT. XVIII. 21.

SECT. XCV. Mat. XVIII. *THEN* when Jesus had given this advice for the accommodation of differences among his disciples, *Peter*, imagining it might be abused by ill-disposed persons, as an encouragement
21 to offer injuries to others, *came to him and said, Lord, how often must I forgive my brother, if he offend against me?* must I go on to do it *until* he has repeated the injury *seven times?*

22 And *Jesus*, in reply, *says to him, I do not* merely *say to thee, Till seven times, but* even *till seventy times seven:* in short, the precept is un-

MAT. XVIII. 21. THEN came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but until seventy times seven.

SECT. XCV. Mat. XVIII.

bounded, and you must never be weary of forgiving your brethren, since you are so much more indebted to the divine mercy, than they can be to your's.

23 Therefore is the kindom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

For this reason, or with respect to this matter, I may properly say, that *the kingdom of heaven*, in its constitution and final process, *may be likened to*, or be illustrated by, the instance of *a certain king* that ruled over a large country,[a] *who*, as he had a great number of officers under him, was *determined* at length *to settle an account with his servants*. 23

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents:

And when he began to reckon with them, *there was brought to him one who* had so abused the eminent station in which he had been placed, and the high confidence which his prince had reposed in him, that he *owed him* a most immense sum, and stood accountable for *ten thousand talents*:[b] 24

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

And as he had nothing to pay which could be any equivalent for the debt, or any considerable compensation for it, *his lord*, according to frequent custom in such cases, (Exod. xxii. 3; Lev. xxv. 47; and 2 Kings iv. 1.) *commanded him to be sold* for a slave, *and* also *his wife and children, and all* the goods *that he had, and payment to be made* with the price of them, as far as it would go. 25

26 The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

The servant therefore falling down in helpless consternation, *prostrated himself at his* master's *feet, and said, Lord*, I beseech thee to *have patience with me* for a while longer, *and I will* endeavour to *pay thee all*. 26

27 Then the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him,

Then the lord of that unhappy *servant*, whose affairs were so utterly desperate, *being melted with compassion*, graciously *discharged him; and*, knowing how vain it was to expect he should ever pay him, declared that, on condition of his 27

[a] *May be likened to*, or be illustrated, *&c.* See sect. lviii. note[i] Vol. I.

[b] *Owed him ten thousand talents.*] According to Dr. Prideaux's computation, if these were *talents of gold*, this would amount to *seventy-two millions sterling*; which is so immense a sum, that it seems strange Antiochus the Great should be able to pay it, as Eutropius tells us he did, to purchase a peace with the Romans: (Eutrop. lib. iv. cap. 2.) But by Livy's account of the conditions of peace, they were *talents of silver*, of which Antiochus was to pay fifteen thousand talents, that is, five hundred talents down, two thousand five hundred when the senate should ratify the peace, and the remaining twelve thousand in twelve years, at a thousand talents a year: Liv. Histor. lib. xxxvii. cap. 45, & lib. xxxviii. cap. 38.) And even thus the sum must have amounted to £6,750,000. See Prid. Connect. Vol. I. Pref. p. 20, and Vol. II. p. 138.—Our Lord seems to have mentioned so large a sum, on purpose to intimate the number and weight of our offences against God, and our utter incapacity of making him any satisfaction.

SECT. XCV. Mat. XVIII.

future good behaviour,[c] he frankly *forgave him all the debt.*

But just *as that servant went out* from the presence of his generous and indulgent sovereign, 28 *he met* with *one of his fellow-servants, who owed him* but a very inconsiderable sum of money, no more than *an hundred pence;*[d] *and laying hold of him by the throat,* and almost strangling him,[e] *he said,* in a furious and outrageous manner, *Pay me that which thou owest* me immediately, or I will detain thee as my prisoner. 29 *And his* poor *fellow-servant fell down at his feet,* as he had done at his lord's, *and entreated him, saying,* in the very words which he himself had used but just before on the like occasion, *Have patience with me* for a while longer, 30 *and I will* endeavour to *pay thee all. And he would not* be prevailed upon to forbear him any longer; *but went* away with him before a magistrate, *and cast him into prison,* protesting he should lie there *till he should pay* even the last farthing of *the debt.*

31 *And when his* other *fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceedingly grieved* at such an instance of unexampled cruelty from a man in his circumstances, *and came and gave their lord* the king *an exact* and faithful *account of the whole matter,*[f] who was highly incensed at 32 so inhuman an action. *Then his lord, having called him* again, *said unto him,* with just indignation, *Thou wicked* and barbarous *slave,*[g] thou knowest that *I* frankly *forgave thee all that* vast *debt* which thou owedst to me, *be-* 33 *cause thou didst entreat my pity:* And *shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant,* when in thy power, *even as I* but just before *had compassion on thee?* Thou

and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all;

30 And he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

[c] On condition of his future good behaviour.] This is a circumstance exceeding natural, and by the revocation of the pardon afterwards, it seems strongly implied.

[d] *An hundred pence.*] Reckoning the Roman denarius at seven pence halfpenny of our money, it amounted to three pounds and half-a-crown.

[e] *By the throat,* and almost strangling him.] This is the proper import of the word πνιγε, which yet more strongly expresses his cruelty.

[f] *Gave their Lord an exact* and faithful *account.*] This is the meaning of the word διεσαφησαν, as Albert has shewn; Observ. p. 116.

[g] *Thou wicked slave.*] The word δουλε is not always a term of reproach, nor does it necessarily imply more than *servant:* (compare Mat. xxv. 21, 23.) Yet in this connection, I thought it would well bear the version I have given it, which may best express the indignation with which his lord is supposed to speak.

art most inexcusable in what thou hast done, and I am determined to treat thee accordingly. SECT. XCV.

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

And his lord, being justly *incensed*, revoked the grant of remission he had just before made, as forfeited by so vile a behaviour; and not only put him in prison, but *delivered him to the tormentors* there, to fetter and scourge him,[h] *till he should pay all that was due to him;* which was equivalent to condemning him to perpetual confinement and painful imprisonment during life. Mat. XVIII. 34

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

And Jesus concluded the discourse with saying, *Thus also will my heavenly Father deal with you, if you do not every one* of you *from your* very *hearts forgive his brother his trespasses;* and I leave it to your own consciences to judge whether it be safe for you to tempt the strictness of his inexorable justice, by the severity of your conduct towards your offending brethren. 35

IMPROVEMENT.

How unreasonable, and how odious, does a severe and uncharitable temper appear, when we view it in the light of this *parable!* Yet what light can be more just than this? We are *indebted to God* more than *ten thousand talents;* from our infancy we begin to contract the debt, and are daily increasing it in our ripening years: justly, therefore, might he *cast us* into the *prison of hell*, till we *paid the uttermost farthing*. And were we to *fall* 26 *at his feet*, with a promise of *paying him all* on his *patient* forbearance, it must be the language of gross ignorance, or of presumptuous folly, when addressed to a Being who knows our poverty, and knows that, in consequence of it, we are utterly incapable of making him any amends. But he magnifies his grace in the kind offers of a free *forgiveness;* and shall we who receive it, and hold our lives and all our hope by it, *take our brethren by the throat*, because they *owe us a few pence?* or shall we carry along with us deep continued resentment, glowing like a 28 hidden fire in our bosoms? *God forbid!* For surely if we do so, *out of our own mouth shall we be condemned*, while we acknowledge 34 the justice of the *sentence* here passed against this *cruel servant*. Ver. 24

[h] *Delivered him to the tormentors*, &c.] Imprisonment is a much greater punishment in the eastern parts of the world than here: state criminals especially, when condemned to it, are not only forced to submit to a very mean and scanty allowance, but are frequently loaded with clogs or yokes of heavy wood, in which they cannot either lie or sit at ease; and, by frequent scourgings, and sometimes by racking, are quickly brought to an untimely end. (See Samedo's China, page 225.) To this there is probably a reference here. Compare § xxxii. note [b], Vol. I. p. 185.

SECT. XCV. Ver. 35

Christ himself has made the application; *so shall my heavenly Father deal with you, if you do not forgive your brethren:* and he has instructed us elsewhere, to ask *forgiveness* only as we grant it; (Mat. vi. 14, 15.) Let us then from this moment discharge our *hearts* of every sentiment of *rancour* and *revenge*, nor ever allow a *word*, or even a *wish*, that savours of it. And as ever we hope our addresses to the throne of divine mercy should meet with a favourable audience, let us *lift up holy hands, without wrath*, as well as *without doubting*. (1 Tim. ii. 8.)

SECT. XCVI.

Christ reproves John for prohibiting one who cast out demons in his name, because he was not of their company. Mark IX. 38—41. Luke IX. 49, 50.

MARK IX. 38.

SECT. XCVI. Mark IX. 38

IN the midst of the preceding discourse, relating to humility *and* self-denial, the apostle *John* (whether desirous of diverting him from a subject which he could not hear pursued without some consciousness of having deserved blame, or thinking it might receive some farther illustration by his remarks upon the case that he should mention) interrupted our Lord,[a] and *answered him*, when he had just been urging a readiness to receive one of the least of his servants in his name, (Mark ix. 37, p. 20.) by *saying, Master*, while we were in our late progress, *we saw one casting out demons in thy name*,[b] *who does not follow us*, nor converse with us as brethren: *and we forbade him* to do it any more, *because he does not follow* thee *among us*, and never had, as we apprehend, any regular commission from thee, and so might possibly have proved an occasion of neglect or reproach to the rest of thy disciples.

MARK IX. 38. AND John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbade him, [because he followeth not with us.] [LUKE IX. 49.]

[a] Interrupted our Lord.] I have inserted this story apart here, that the thread of the preceding discourse might not be broken; that the ninety-third section might not be lengthened beyond due bounds; and that I might have room to illustrate and improve this passage, which, though short, has both its difficulty and its use.

[b] *Casting out demons in thy name.*] Probably this was a case something resembling that of the sons of Sceva; (Acts xix. 13—16.) and God might see reason now, to grant that efficacy to their adjurations, which he afterwards denied, when the evidences of the gospel were proposed so much more distinctly and fully, after the *descent of the Spirit*.—Dr. Clarke supposes, that he was one of John the Baptist's disciples.

SECT. XCVI.

Mark IX. 39.

39 But Jesus said [unto him,] forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. [LUKE IX. 50.—]

But Jesus said unto him, Do not forbid, or go about to hinder *him* at present; *for,* by thus making use of my name, he appears to have some reverence and regard for me, and will not therefore set himself against me; since *there is no man who shall* be seen to *work* such *a miracle in my name, that can quickly,* or on any slight occasion, *speak evil of me,* or say any thing dishonourable of that name for which he professes such a regard: And be that regard ever so imperfect, I would not discourage one who acts thus now: *for,* with respect to such, and in a case like this, I may use a proverb (the reverse of that which I mentioned on a different occasion,) and say, *Whosoever is not against us, is for us;*[c] and therefore I would by no means condemn a man for doing that by which the kingdom of Satan is in fact weakened, and my name glorified, though he have not my immediate and express commission. I rather take it in good part, as I am willing to do any thing that looks like a token of esteem and affection to me, be it ever so inconsiderable; *for,* as I formerly told you, (Mat. x. 42, Vol. I. p. 421.) *whoever shall present you with a cup of* cold *water* only *in my name,* that is, *because you belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, He shall not lose his* proportionable *reward.* And so he went on to warn them of the danger of offending any of the weakest of his disciples, in the manner recounted and explained above. (See Mark ix. 42, p. 20.) And when he had concluded that discourse he not long after quitted Galilee. Compare Mat. xix. 1. sect. cxxxv.

40 For he that is not against us, is on our part. [LUKE IX. —50.]

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink, in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, He shall not lose his reward.

[c] *Whosoever is not against us, is for us.*] Our Lord had formerly said, (Mat. xii. 30.) *He that is not with me, is against me;* thereby giving his hearers a just and necessary admonition, that, on the whole, the war between him and Satan admitted of no neutrality, and that those who were indifferent to him would finally be treated as his enemies. (See sect. lxi. Vol. I. p. 339.) But here, in another view, he very consistently uses a different and seemingly opposite proverb, the counterpart of the former, directing his followers to judge of mens characters in the most candid manner, and charitably to hope, that they who did not oppose his cause wished well to it; a conduct peculiarly reasonable, when his cause lay under so many discouragements. Probably many who now concealed their regard to him, were afterwards animated courageously to profess it, though at the greatest hazard.—I cannot, with Mr. Baxter, think an express declaration of regard to Christ to have been more necessary in the former case than now; but it is most obvious, that Christ requires us to be more rigorous in judging ourselves, than he allows us to be in judging each other.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. XCVI. MARK IX. 38 IT is sad, that *the spirit*, which remains in so many Christians, and in this instance appeared even in the beloved Saint John, should (as the apostle James expresses it,) *lust unto envy:* (Jam. iv. 5.) How ill does that spirit become a *disciple*, and much more a *minister* of the benevolent *Jesus!* The apostle *Paul* had learnt, and taught, a better temper, when he *rejoiced that Christ was preached*, even by those who were his personal enemies, (Phil. i. 18.) *To seek our own glory, is not glory;* (Prov. xxv. 27.) and to confine religion to them that *follow us*, is a *narrowness of spirit* which we should avoid and abhor.

39, 40 *Christ* here gives us a lovely example of *candour* and *moderation;* he was willing to put the best construction on dubious cases, and to treat those as *friends* who were not avowed and declared *enemies*. Perhaps in this instance, it might be a means of overcoming a remainder of prejudice, and perfecting what was wanting in the faith and obedience of the persons in question; at least it suited the present state of things, in which men are to be judged of by their *professions* and *actions*, as their *hearts* cannot immediately and certainly be known.

But let us *judge ourselves* with greater severity, remembering there is an approaching *day, in which the secrets of all hearts will be made manifest;* in which those who have indeed been *neuters* in the war between *Christ and Satan*, will be treated as *enemies*: and those other words will be fulfilled, *He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.* (Mat. xii. 30, and Luke xi. 23.)

41 In that *day*, may the sincerity of our *hearts* be discovered, and then we may rejoice in this repeated assurance, that the *least of our services* shall be kindly remembered, and abundantly *rewarded* according to the riches of divine bounty and grace.

SECT. XCVII.

Our Lord sends out the seventy disciples with large instructions, like those he had before given to the twelve apostles. Luke X. 1—16.

LUKE X. 1.

AFTER *these things*, before he departed from Galilee, *the Lord* Jesus intending, when the approaching feast of tabernacles was over,[a] to

LUKE X. 1.
AFTER these things, the Lord

[a] When the approaching feast of tabernacles was over.] It seems to be much more reasonable to suppose, that Christ sent out the seventy before the feast of

SECT. XCVII.

Luke X. 1.

appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

make one journey more over the country, in the last half year he was to spend on earth, *fixed upon seventy others* of his disciples *also*, besides the twelve apostles so frequently mentioned before, (see Luke ix. i, & *seq.* § lxxiv.) *and sent them* out *before him, two and two* together, *into every city, and* more private *place, into which he himself intended* shortly *to come;* and thus, as it were, he divided the whole country into thirty-five lesser circuits.

2 Therefore he said unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the labourers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

2 And at their setting out he gave them many important instructions, nearly resembling those which he had before addressed to the apostles; and as it was a large and copious field for service on which they were to enter, *he said therefore to them,*[b] as he had formerly done to their brethren, (Mat. ix. 37, 38. Vol. I. p. 405.) *The harvest is indeed great*, and many souls are to be gathered in, *but the* faithful *labourers are* as yet very *few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would*, by his immediate access to the spirits of men, *thrust forth* more *labourers into his harvest*, though the work may prove so fatiguing and hazardous, that they are naturally averse to it.[c]

tabernacles than after it; considering how little time he had between that and the feast of dedication, in which interval he dispatched his last circuit in Galilee. To take from those three months, all the period to be allowed for their journey and return, seems inconvenient. But it is astonishing that Mr. Le Clerc, and some others, should suppose that these instructions were given to them in Christ's journey to the above-mentioned feast: for, not to mention the impossibility of holding a discourse with such a number of people on the road, about an affair of such importance, it is expressly said, John vii. 10, that he went up to the feast of tabernacles privately; which is utterly inconsistent with his being attended with such a train as seventy, or (according to that author,) eighty-two persons, for Le Clerc supposes the twelve were also with him.—I shall elsewhere give my reasons, why I suppose the story of the Samaritans refusing him entertainment, (though recorded Luke ix. 51—56;) to have happened later than this. (See § cxxvii. note [a].) At present I would only observe, that the expression, *after these things*, in the beginning of this chapter, may either refer to the stories immediately preceding, in the close of the former, from ver. 57 to the end, or to the general series of events recorded above, though (as I think the evangelist himself strongly intimates,) one little history be transposed.

[b] *He said therefore to them.*] Luke is the only evangelist who has given us this account of Christ's sending out the seventy; and it is the less to be wondered at that he should do it so particularly, if the ancient tradition be true, which Origen and Epiphanius have mentioned, that he was himself *one* of the number. See Dr. Whitby's Preface to Luke, where he has shewn this to be highly probable, and no way inconsistent with what Luke has said at the beginning of his gospel.

[c] *That he would thrust forth* more *labourers*, &c.] As both Luke here, and Matthew in a parallel passage, (Mat. ix. 38;) use the word ἐκβαλλη, which literally signifies to *thrust out*, I was willing to express the force of it in the version, as well as the paraphrase. (See note [k] on Mat. ix. 38, § lxxiii. p. 405.)—So many of the expressions used in this discourse, are to be found in that to the twelve,

SECT. XCVII. Luke X. 3

And as for you, *go your ways* with all the resolution and zeal you can employ in your ministry, as indeed you will need it all; for *behold, I send you forth as* so many defenceless *lambs* 4 *in the midst of* ravenous and cruel *wolves*. Yet as you go under the singular care of Divine Providence, *carry not* with you any *purse* of money, *nor* even a *scrip* for your provisions, *nor* any more *shoes* than you have now on your feet; *nor* stay so much as to *salute any man* as you pass *by* him on *the way*;[d] but let it evidently appear to all who see you, that your thoughts are full of the great errand on which you go.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes; and salute no man by the way.

5 *And*, in all the stages of your journey, carry along with you those benevolent affections which are so well suited to the design of your mission: *into whatever house* therefore *you* shall happen to *come*, at your *first* entrance *say, Peace be upon this house*, and pray that prosperity and happiness may attend the whole family. *And if any son* and heir *of peace*, or any truly good man who is worthy of such blessings, *be there* in the house, *your* prayer for *peace* and prosperity shall be answered, and *shall rest upon it; but if not, it* shall not be entirely lost, but *shall return upon you*, and you shall be the better for those kind and friendly sentiments, even though the wishes they dictate be not exactly answered.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house:

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 *And* when you are entered into any lodgings, *continue in the same house* as long as you stay in the town, cheerfully and contentedly *eating and drinking what you find with them*; *for* as, on the one hand, *the* common *labourer is worthy of his reward*, and therefore you who take so much pains to bring them to the greatest blessings, have much more right to your entertainment; so, on the other, it is beneath you to be very

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give; for the labourer is worthy of his hire.

§ lxxiv. lxxv. that it is generally sufficient to refer to the paraphrase and notes there, for the explication of them here.

[d] *Nor* stay to *salute any man*, as you pass *by* him on *the way*.] Our Lord did not intend by this, to forbid his disciples in general, nor even any of his ministers, a decent use of the customary tokens of civil respect to others, any more than he forbids the use of shoes and purses; only while they were employed on this particular message, he required the forbearance of them, that every one who saw them pass by, might perceive that their minds were full of the most important business, and that they were earnestly intent on the immediate dispatch of it. (Compare 2 Kings iv. 29.) This was the more necessary, as they were so much straitened for time. See above, note [a].

Go not from house to house.

solicitous and nice about the manner of it: and therefore *do not* create an unnecessary trouble in the family where you are, or *go from one house to another*, in hope of better accommodations during the short stay you make in a place. SECT. XCVII. Luke X. 7.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you:

And, I repeat it again, *Into whatever* town or *city you come, and they* receive and *entertain you* freely and cheerfully, be ready to accept their kindness to you, and without any difficulty *eat* and drink *such things as are set before you:* 8

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

And I am sure I put it into your power to make them an abundant recompence, when I commission you, as I do now, to *heal the sick that are in it, and* to *say unto them, The* long-expected *kingdom of God is come near unto you*, and therefore prepare yourselves thankfully to receive the blessings of it, which are thus freely offered to you by the Messiah. 9

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

But into whatsoever city you come and they perversely set themselves against you, and *do not entertain you*, nor regard your message, *go out into the streets of it, and say*, in a most public and solemn manner, Since you reject so gracious and important a message, we cannot but consider you as rejected by God, and devoted to certain and inevitable destruction; *we* therefore separate ourselves from all that belongs to you, and *wipe off* from our feet, as a testimony *against you, even the very dust of your city which cleaves to us;*[e] *nevertheless know this assuredly, that the kingdom of God is come near unto you*, and in the midst of all the calamities which are to befal you, let your consciences witness that mercy hath been offered and refused. 10

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you; notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city.

And I say unto you, as I formerly did to your brethren, *That in that day* of the final judgment *it shall be more tolerable* even *for* the accursed inhabitants of *Sodom* itself, *than for that city*, wheresoever it be found. 11 12

13 Wo unto thee,

Now while our Lord was thus mentioning to his seventy disciples the wretched case of those 13

[e] *Wipe off the very dust of your city*, &c.] For the import of this solemn action, see sect. lxxiv. note[o], p. 411, from whence it will appear, that Dr. Edwards's singular interpretation, (Edw. on Script. Vol. II. p. 189—193) is not only foreign, but contrary to our Lord's purpose. He strangely supposes it an allusion to those courts, where, as in what we call pie-powder, (or *pieds poudres*) courts, controversies were immediately decided, as it were, *before people could wipe the dust off their shoes.*

SECT. XC II.

Luke X. 13.

that rejected the gospel, he could not forbear reflecting that this was the condition of some of those cities where he himself had made the most frequent visits, and the longest abode; he therefore repeated the pathetic lamentation he had before taken up for them,[f] and said, On this account *Wo unto thee, O* thou obstinate *Chorazin, Wo unto thee, O* thou incorrigible *Bethsaida; for if the wonders which have been wrought in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon*, degenerate as they were, *they would have repented long since, sitting in sackcloth, and* lying down in *ashes*, to express the depth of their humiliation and sorrow. *But* though vengeance has long since been executed upon them, God will make manifest the impartiality of his justice, and *it shall be more tolerable in the* day of his tremendous *judgment for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And thou, O* most ungrateful and rebellious *Capernaum, who hast been* distinguished from all the rest by my longest residence in thee, so that thou hast (as it were) been *lifted up to heaven* in that respect as well as in magnificence and wealth, *shall be brought down* even *to hell*, and sunk into the deepest and most irrecoverable ruin, since thou hast heard my gospel only to despise it.

Chorazin, Wo unto thee Bethsaida; for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shall be thrust down to hell.

16 And then turning to the seventy disciples, who still stood around him, he concluded his instructions to them in these important words (to the same purpose as he before had said to the apostles, Mat. x. 40, sect. lxxvi.) *He that heareth you*, in the discharge of this your embassy, *heareth me; and*, on the other hand, *he that rejecteth you*, in like manner *rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me, rejecteth him that sent me*, even the Father himself, whose credentials I bear, and who will punish the despisers of the gospel, as impious rebels, who presume to contemn his Infinite Majesty, and provoke his almighty power.

16 He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

[f] *He repeated the pathetic lamentation, &c.*] Considering the affectionate temper of our Lord, it is no wonder that he should renew his lamentation over those unhappy places where he had so intimately conversed; and that he should do it in such words as these, so well calculated to alarm, and impress all that should hear or read them. Oh that they might now have their due weight with those, who might pass them over too slightly, when they occurred before, in Mat. xi. 20—24. (See sect. lix. p. 32, 325.) Oh that every impenitent creature who reads them, might know *that the sentence of his own condemnation is now before his eyes.*

IMPROVEMENT.

So unwilling was the blessed Jesus to give over his kind attempts for mens salvation, he projected *another circuit* through the country, and sends forth *other messengers*, more numerous than the former company—he renews his *invitations* to perishing sinners, and his *lamentations* over those who had hitherto *rejected the counsel of God against themselves*; (Luke vii. 30.) Thus let us love the souls of men: thus let us use repeated endeavours to deliver them; endeavours, which would probably be much more successful than they are, if these wise and gracious directions of Christ to his *ministers* were more attentively observed by those who are honoured with that important office. SECT. XCVII. Ver. 1. 13, 15

Let all such *cast their care upon God*; let them *go forth* cheerfully in a dependence on his protection and favour; let them carry about with them hearts full of affection for the whole human race, seeking and praying for the *peace* of all around them; cheerfully *contenting themselves with such things as they have*; (Heb. xiii. 5;) and neither pursuing the grandeurs nor the delicacies of life with an eager attachment. 3, 4 5 7, 8

Send forth, O Lord, such *labourers into thine harvest*, and animate them to a becoming zeal in their work, by a deep sense of that dreadful *condemnation* which *those* will incur who, *despising them*, pour contempt on their *divine Master*, and his *heavenly Father*, in whose name he was *sent!* May God preserve *our country* from that guilt and ruin! *The kingdom of God is come nigh unto* us, and we are *lifted up to heaven* by our privileges: may we not, after all, *be cast down to hell* for the abuse of them! but may divine grace make such *a way* for the gospel *into our hearts*, that we may cordially *receive* all who faithfully proclaim it, and *bid them welcome in the name of the Lord!* 2 16 11 15

SECT. XCVIII.

Christ discourses with his brethren about his going up to the feast of tabernacles, and stays some time after them. John VII. 1—13.

JOHN VII. 1.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in

JOHN VII. 1.

AFTER these things, that is, after he had miraculously fed the five thousand, walked on the sea to his disciples, and discoursed with the multitude concerning the bread of life,[a] *Jesus* for some time *walked*, or travelled, as we before SECT. XCVIII. John VII. 1

[a] *After these things*, &c.] Those that I have mentioned here, are the last which had been recorded by John. See a more particular account of them, sect. lxxviii.—lxxxii.

SECT. XCVIII. John VII. 1

observed, *in Galilee*, and there instructed his disciples; (see p. 14.) *for he would not* then *walk* or converse familiarly *in Judea*,[b] *because the Jews*, and more especially their rulers, incensed by the growing fame of his miracles, and the freedom of his discourses, *sought* an opportunity *to slay him*, either by private assassination, tumultuous assault, or legal process.

Galilee; for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 *And a* very noted *feast of the Jews was* then *near*, which is [*called*] *the feast of tabernacles*; instituted in commemoration of their dwelling in tents in the wilderness, and celebrated in booths erected for that purpose, with great solemnity and joy. (See Lev. xxiii. 34, & *seq.*)

2 Now the Jews feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 *Therefore his brethren*, or near kinsmen in Galilee, *said unto him*, We would advise thee to *remove from hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also* who are there *may*, for the confirmation of their faith in thee, behold thy miracles, and *see the* mighty *works which thou performest* here: *For* this retirement seems not at all to suit the great pretensions thou art making to a public and extraordinary character; as it is well known that *no man will* choose to *act any* remarkable *thing in secret, that is himself desirous*, like thee, *to be publicly known* and talked of:[c] *if*, therefore, *thou* art really the promised Messiah, and *performest these things*, which we so often see at home, by a divine commission, go up to Jerusalem, and there *manifest thyself to the* great men of the *world*, and appear in places of the most public concourse; and thou canst not have a better opportunity of doing it, than at this celebrated feast, which brings together so many, not only from the land of Israel, but from neighbouring countries. This they said, not out of any real friendship and respect, but to make farther trial of him, and

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest:

4 For *there* is no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly; if thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

5 For neither did

[b] *He would not walk in Judea.*] This may be an intimation, either that he was not at Jerusalem the preceding passover, or at least made no public appearance, or long abode there. I am inclined to think the former was the case.—Undoubtedly, his omission of a journey thither, at some of the great feasts, might be vindicated by his extraordinary character, and those intimations he might have from his heavenly Father, of being dispensed with, for reasons not particularly known to us, who have no concern with them. See note[b], sect. lxxxiii. Vol. I. p. 459.

[c] *That is himself desirous to be publicly known* and talked of.] This seems to be a very invidious and groundless insinuation, as if he was actuated by ostentatious views; the contrary to which appeared so evidently in the whole of his conduct, that nothing but base envy could suggest such a charge.

his brethren believe in him.

in some measure to upbraid him with those precautions which he thought proper to observe; *for*, notwithstanding all the evidences he had given of his divine mission, yet *neither did his brethren* and kindred themselves *believe in him*, when they saw that he took no such method to raise himself and his family, as they thought inseparable from the character of the Messiah, whenever he should appear.[d]

SECT. XCVIII. John VII. 5.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready.

Then Jesus said unto them, My time, either to manifest myself, or to go up to Jerusalem, *is not yet come; but your time is always ready*, and such a circumstance in your case is comparatively of very little importance.

6

7 The world cannot hate you, but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

You have no reason to fear any injury or assault, as *the world cannot hate you*,[e] because it is on principles of carnal wisdom that you act, and so have nothing in your conduct that may draw upon you any particular opposition; *but me it hates;* not on account of any ill action which I have committed, but *because*, from a zeal for truth, and a desire of its reformation, *I bear my testimony concerning it, that its deeds are evil.*

7

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast,

Do you, therefore, *go up to this feast*, whenever you please, without waiting for me; and acquiesce in what I now tell you, that *I do not* as [*yet*] *go up to this feast*;[f] *for* that which I judge *my*

8

[d] *Neither did his brethren believe in him*, &c.] It is astonishing that these near relations of Christ, who must have had so many opportunities of seeing the glories both of his character and miracles, (which last they here expressly acknowledge,) should continue in unbelief. But they unhappily laid it down as a first principle, that the Messiah must be a *temporal Prince;* and finding this mark of his mission wanting, and seeing (more strongly than others, not so intimately conversant with him, could do,) his aversion to any such scheme, they would yield to no other proofs; and are, I fear, on the fatal list of those who perished, as thousands now do, by opposing hypothesis to fact. See Dr Sykes on the truth of Christianity, p. 128.

[e] *The world cannot hate you.*] These words, gentle as they may appear, contain a most awful insinuation, that these his kinsmen were persons governed entirely by carnal views, and therefore destitute of the love of God, and all well-grounded hope from him.

[f] *I do not* [*yet*] *go up to this feast.*] The reader may observe, that I inclose the word [*yet*] which answers to ουπω in the original, in crotchets; and the reason is, because I do indeed doubt, whether it was in the oldest copies. And this doubt arises, not merely from Porphyry's objecting against this as a falsehood, (for frequent experience has taught us how little the enemies of Christianity are to be trusted in their representations of scripture,) but from observing that Jerom, and the other most ancient fathers, who reply to that objection, do not found their answer on his citing the passage wrong, but as they justly might, on the intimation our Lord gave of his intending shortly to go to the feast, in that expression, *My time is not yet fully come.*—It is a glorious testimony to the unblemished integrity of our Lord's character, that so cunning and inveterate an enemy was forced to have recourse to such

SECT. XCVIII. John VII. 8.

most convenient *time* of doing it, *is not yet fully come*, nor do I need to be directed by you in my conduct on such occasions as these.

for my time is not yet full come.

9 *Now when he had said these things unto them*, he left them to go up alone, while *he continued* [*still*] *in Galilee* for a few days longer: 10 *But when his brethren* or kindred *were gone up, then he also* himself *went up to the feast*,[g] *not publicly* with a train of attendants, as he had often done,[h] *but as it were in secret*, with as much privacy as he could.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 *The Jews therefore*, not seeing him appear as usual, *sought for him at the* beginning of the *feast, and said*, What is become of Jesus, and *where is he?* or what can have prevented his coming up to the feast?[i]

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 *And there was*, in the mean time, *a great murmuring among the people concerning him; for some said* (as they had, from the whole tenor of his life, the utmost reason to conclude), *Surely*[k] *he is* an eminently pious and *a good man: but others*, under the force of strong prejudices, suspected the worst, and *said, Nay*, that cannot be, *but he* certainly *seduces the* ignorant *populace*, however he comes by this power of doing it; and the wisest part of mankind must see that he will undoubtedly at last draw his followers into ruin, as some other impostors have lately done. (See Acts v. 36, 37.)—

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay, but he deceiveth the people.

13 Thus they privately debated the matter; *howbeit, no one*, that thought favourably of him,

13 Howbeit, no

mean and ridiculous methods of aspersing it. See Dr Mill on this text, and Cleric. de Arte Critica, part iii. p. 232.

[g] *He also went up to the feast.*] Our Lord might know of some circumstance of particular danger, which might have rendered *his going up* at the usual time, and in company with his brethren, unsafe, and therefore improper.

[h] *Not publicly* with a train of attendants, &c.] I look on this as a most certain argument, that the story in Luke ix. 51—56, cannot (as most commentators suppose) relate to this journey; since it is so evident, he was then attended with a numerous train of followers. Compare note[a], sect. xcvii. p. 36.

[i] *Where is he?* or what can have prevented his coming up to the feast?] If our Lord had absented himself from the two preceding feasts, (which perhaps the expostulations of his brethren, ver. 3, 4, may imply,) there was yet an obvious reason for the surprise which this question expresses; for undoubtedly our Lord used generally to attend on these occasions. See Vol. I. p. 459, sect. lxxxiii. note[b].

[k] *Surely.*] It is possible, as our translators have supposed, that the word ὅτι here may be only an expletive; but to me it seems probable that it may not improperly be rendered *surely*, or *truly*, which is accordingly the sense that I have sometimes given it.—We should not, I think, unnecessarily conclude a word to be quite insignificant in any writer of credit and character, especially in the sacred penmen.

man spake openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

spoke his mind *with freedom concerning him,*[1] *for fear of the* rulers among the *Jews*, who were jealous of his growing fame, and looked with a very malignant eye on all who took any peculiar notice of Jesus. SECT. XCVIII. John VII. 13.

IMPROVEMENT.

We see how little the greatest external advantages can do without the Divine blessing, when some of the *nearest relations* of *Christ* himself, by whom he had been most intimately known, were not prevailed upon to *believe in him.* Who then can wonder if some remain incorrigible in the most regular and pious families? How much more valuable is *the union* to him, which is founded on a cordial and obedient *faith*, than *that* which arose from the *bands of nature?* and how cautiously should we watch against those *carnal prejudices* by which even the *brethren of Christ* were alienated from him? Ver. 5.

Our Lord, we see, used a prudent care to avoid persecution and danger till *his time was fully come;* and it is our duty to endeavour, by all wise and upright precautions, to secure and preserve ourselves, that we may have opportunities for farther service. 1, 8

In the course of such service we must expect, especially if we appear under a public character, to meet with a variety of *censures*; but let us remember, that *Jesus* himself went *through evil report and good report;* by some applauded as *a good man*, but by others, and those the greater part of his countrymen, condemned as *deceiving the people.* Let us learn of *Christ* patiently to endure such injurious treatment; and endeavour to behave ourselves so, that we may have a *testimony* in the consciences of men, and in the presence of God, that after the example of our great Master, *in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have our conversation in the world;* (2 Cor. i. 12.) Then will our names be had in remembrance, and the honour and reward of our faithful obedience continue, when the memories of those that reviled us are perished with them. 12

SECT. XCIX.

Christ, going up privately to Jerusalem at the feast of tabernacles, vindicates his conduct, and further urges the proofs of his Divine mission. John VII. 14—24.

JOHN VII. 14.

JOHN VII. 14. NOW about the THUS were the Jews divided in their sentiments about our blessed Lord, and though

[1] *No one*, that thought favourably of him, &c.] The reason afterwards given renders such a restriction absolutely necessary. Those that thought contemptibly of Christ, might have spoken their minds as freely as they pleased.

SECT. XCIX. John VII. 14.

they eagerly inquired after him, they knew not where to find him: but *now in the midst of the feast* of tabernacles about the third or fourth day, *Jesus went up* to Jerusalem, and entered publicly *into the temple, and taught* the people, who were in vast multitudes assembled there.

midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

15 *And the Jews* who heard him *were amazed, saying, How does this man understand letters?*[a] or how comes he to be so well acquainted with sacred literature, as to be able thus to expound the scriptures, and to apply himself to us with such gracefulness and propriety, *having never learned* these arts of address at any place of public education?

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

16 *Jesus answered them, and said,* There is no such reason why you should wonder at this; for *my doctrine,* or that which I now teach you, *is not mine* own invention, or what I have learnt by any common method of inquiry; *but* it is entirely *his that sent me,* and I learned it by immediate inspiration from him.

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 And if you desire rightly to enter into the evidences of it, you must make it your great care to maintain an honest and religious temper; for *if any one be* resolutely *determined* to observe the dictates of my heavenly Father, and *to do his will,*[b] though ever so contrary to the impulse of a corrupt nature, *he shall* then quickly *understand, whether my doctrine be of God, or whether I speak* it *of myself*; for the evidence is plain to an honest mind, and the correspondence which such a truly good man will find between the whole system of my doctrine and his own inward ex-

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

[a] *How does this man understand letters?*] I see no reason to believe that our Lord adorned his discourses with quotations from, or references to the writers that were then most celebrated for their learning, or shewed any extraordinary acquisitions in history, antiquities, &c. The evangelists have given us no specimen of this kind; and it is certain that foreign literature was then in great contempt among the Jews.—The words undoubtedly refer to our Lord's great acquaintance with the scriptures, and the judicious and masterly manner in which he taught the people out of them, with far greater majesty and nobler eloquence than the scribes could attain to by a learned education.—Compare Mark i. 22, and Mat. vii. 29. Vol. I. p. 251, note g.

[b] *Be determined to do his will.*] This seems to be the import of those words, Θελημα ποιειν. (See sect. xxii. note[a], Vol. I. p. 131.)—This important passage seems an express declaration that every upright man, to whom the gospel is proposed, will see and own the evidence of its divine authority, which indeed might reasonably be supposed to have been concluded from the awful judgment pronounced on those who presume to reject it.

SECT. XCIX.

John VII. 18.

perience, will be unto him instead of a thousand speculative arguments. In the mean time you might observe something, even in the very manner of my teaching, sufficient to convince you that I am no impostor: for *he that*, in such a circumstance, and with such pretensions, *speaks of himself*, without any divine commission, will govern himself by secular views; and a sagacious observer will soon see that he *is seeking his own glory* and interest, even under the most self-denying forms: *but he that* in the whole of his conduct shews that he *seeks the glory* of God, as *of him that* he declares to have *sent him*, gives great reason to believe that *he is true* and sincere in that declaration, *and* that *there is no unrighteousness* or imposture *in him*.[c]

18 He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

But your character is the very reverse of this, and you cannot but know it in your own conscience: for let me upon this occasion call you to reflect upon your own conduct, and appeal to that: *hath not Moses given you the law*, and do you not eagerly contend for its divine original? *and yet none of you observe the law* which he has given you. If you deny the charge, let me remind you of that grand precept, "Thou shalt "not kill," and then ask you, *Wherefore do you go about to kill me*, though an innocent and upright person, who am come to bring you a most important message from God?

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

This Jesus said with reference to what he knew to be the secret design of some of his hearers, who were even then plotting his destruction; but *the multitude*, who were not aware of it, ignorantly and rudely *answered and said*, Surely *thou art possessed* and distracted,[d] to talk thus; dost thou not safely travel from place to

20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil:

[c] *No unrighteousness* or imposture *in him.*) The word αδικια, in this opposition to αληθης, must signify *imposture*. Yet I think it the fairest way to translate the original words in all their extent, and content myself with suggesting in the paraphrase those limitations which the particular connection requires.

[d] *Thou art possessed*, and distracted.] So some of them express it, John x. 20, *He hath a devil, and is mad:* which plainly shews (as many have observed,) that they thought some of the worst kind and degrees of lunacies proceeded from the agency of some demon: as many considerable Greek writers plainly did. See Bos. Exercit. p. 41—43.) But it can never be argued from hence that possession and lunacy are universally synonymous terms. When joined together they seem to signify different things; the former being put for the *cause*, and the latter for the *effect*.

SECT. XCIX. John VII. 20.

place, and appear in our most public assemblies, even here at Jerusalem, and *who goes about* or desires *to kill thee?*

who goeth about to kill thee?

Jesus, referring to the design which he knew some of them had of renewing their prosecution against him as a sabbath-breaker, because he had commanded the disabled man at the pool of Bethesda to carry his bed on that day, (compare John v. 16, Vol. I. p. 267,) *answered* in the gentlest manner, *and said unto them, I have* some time ago, *performed one* remarkable *work*,[e] *and you all*, to this very day, *wonder on account of it*,[f] that I should order the man that I cured to carry his couch on the sabbath-day:

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

Yet a little reflection might convince you that your cavil is very unreasonable, even on your own principles: for *Moses gave you* a precept, which required *circumcision, (not that it is* originally *of Moses'* institution, *but* had been formerly established by the observation of Abraham, and *of the* other *fathers* of our nation, many ages before Moses was born, which therefore could not properly be altered by him;[g]) *and you* scruple not to *circumcise a man*-child *on the sabbath-day*, if it happen to be the eighth from his birth. *If [then] to prevent the violation of Moses' law* by deferring this sacred rite, you acknowlege it fit that *a man* should

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) and ye on the sabbath-day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the sabbath-day receive circumcision,

[e] *I have* some time ago *performed one* remarkable *work*.] It is plain the miracle here referred to was wrought a year and a half before this feast. Compare sect. xlvi. note [a], Vol. I. p. 262.

[f] *And you all wonder on account of it.*] I here follow Thyophylact and Beza in joining the words διὰ τοῦτο to the end of this verse, because it is certain that in their usual signification they cannot properly introduce the next; and John xix. 11. (sect. clxxxviii.) may be an instance of the like kind—The Prussian translators render it, *Because Moses gave you circumcision*, &c. and the learned Elsner inclines to this version: (Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 314, 315.) But though I am sensible ὅτι ἐντολὴν sometimes signifies *because*, (see Gen. xxxviii. 26; Numb. x. 31; and xiv. 43; Septuag. and Hebr.) I cannot find διὰ τοῦτο ever so used; and I think, if it be retained at the beginning of the next verse, it should be rendered, *As to this matter*; which sense it may perhaps have in Mat. xiii. 52; xviii. 23; and in a few other places; and so Grotius takes it here. See Dr. Whitby on this place.

[g] *Not that it is* originally *of Moses*, &c.] An excellent person, justly celebrated in the learned world, has lately suggested to me a thought on these words, (which I have not met with elsewhere, but have briefly hinted in the paraphrase) as to the reason why our Lord makes this obvious remark, that circumcision was older than the time of Moses. Had Moses instituted it he would probably have ordered it so as to make it quadrate with his law relating to the strict rest of the sabbath; but finding it instituted by a previous covenant, which his law could not disannul, (see Gal. iii. 17.) he left it still on the same footing.—This argument will indeed infer that the strict sabbatical rest was not observed in the patriarchal age; but yet it might be a day of extraordinary devotion, which I apprehend to be proved from Gen. ii. 2

that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day?

receive circumcision on the sabbath itself: [*why*] *are you incensed against me, that,* by speaking a word, *I have cured a man,* who was *entirely* disabled,[h] *on the sabbath;* as if it was a more servile work to heal than to wound? or how do you imagine that I have not power, when I have thus healed him, to manifest the perfection of the cure, by commanding him to carry his couch?[i] SECT. XCIX. John VII. 23

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Judge not according to these prejudices which the meanness of my *appearance* tends to produce; *but judge righteous* and equitable *judgment;* which if you do, you must necessarily acknowledge my divine mission to be as evident and certain as that of Moses himself, to whose precepts you profess so great a regard. 24

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us learn of our meek and humble Master, to refer the *honour* of all we know and do, to *divine instruction* communicated to us, and *divine grace* working in, and by us; that, *seeking the glory of God,* we may have the surest evidence that we are truly *his.* Let us on all occasions remember, that *integrity* and *uprightness* will be a certain security to us against dangerous *mistakes* in matters of religion. If *the light* we already have, be faithfully improved, we may humbly hope, that more will be given in; nor shall we then fail of convincing evidence, that the *gospel-doctrine is of God;* for the experience of its power on our hearts will check our *passions,* and destroy the prejudices that would prevent the *truth* from taking place in our minds. Ver. 16, 18

Let us receive *his doctrine* as *divine,* and hearken unto Christ as *sent of God;* and whatsoever be the vile *reproaches* we may meet with from a wicked world, and the malicious *designs* it may form against us, let us be resolute and stedfast in the practice of the duties he has taught us, that *with well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.* (1 Pet. ii. 15.) 17, 19

Our Lord was reviled as a *demoniac* and a *lunatic;* but instead

[h] *I have cured a man entirely.*] Our translation loses much of the emphasis: the words ὁλον ανθρωπον υγιη εποιησα literally signify, *I have healed,* or made sound, *a whole man.* But the ambiguity in our English word *whole* rendered such a version very improper. I therefore thought it necessary, a little to vary the expression, but the sense is altogether the same.—But, since I published this, a very accurate critic, both in the Greek and English language, has suggested another version, yet more literal than this, or any of the rest: *I have made a man sound throughout.*

[i] That I have not power, when I have thus healed him. &c.] So our Lord himself states the argument, in a case nearly resembling this, (Mat. ix. 5. 6, Vol. I. p. 260;) and might probably here intend to insinuate it, though in an oblique manner.

SECT. XCIX. Ver. 20 21—23 24

of *rendering railing for railing*, he replied in the words of gentleness and sobriety. So let us endeavour to conquer the rudeness of those *attacks* we may meet with in his cause; that we may, if possible, remove the *prejudices* so fatal to those that entertain them, and form men to that equitable and impartial *judgment*, which would soon turn all their cavils against *Christ* into admiration, praise, and obedience.

SECT. C.

The Jews pass a variety of censures on Christ; and the sanhedrim, alarmed by the regard which some expressed towards him, send officers to seize him; but Christ openly declares that their purposes should not immediately take effect. John VII. 25—36

JOHN VII. 25.

SECT. C. John VII. 25.

THEN, while our Lord was thus discoursing at the feast of tabernacles, *some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem*, who knew more of the designs of the sanhedrim than others who had spoken before (ver. 20,) *said*, *Is not this he whom they seek* an opportunity *to put to death?*

JOHN VII. 25. THEN said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?

26 *But behold, he* is not only come up hither to the feast, but *speaks openly* and freely in the very temple itself; *and they* are so far from seizing him, that they *do not* so much as *say any thing to* prohibit *him: do the rulers* then *indeed know* they were mistaken in their former censures, and are they now persuaded in their conscien-

26 But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him: Do the rulers know indeed, that this is the very Christ?

27 ces *that this is really the Messiah? But we* have sufficient reason to conclude, this cannot be the case; for many of us *know this man*, from *whence he is*, and are sure that he was born of Joseph's wife; *whereas, when the Messiah comes, no man will* thus *know* from *whence he is;* for he is to be born in a miraculous way of a virgin.[a]

27 Howbeit, we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

[a] He is to be born in a miraculous way of a virgin.] It is evident from Mat. ii. 4, 5, that the Jews apprehended the Messiah was to be born at Bethlehem; and from a multitude of other places, that they knew he was to be a descendant of David; (compare ver. 42.) I know not how therefore to account for their saying that, *when Christ came, no man would know whence he is*, but by supposing, with Archbishop Tillotson, (Vol. II. p. 454;) that the words refer to an expectation they had, that he would be *born of a virgin*.—As for the notion which Justin Martyr mentions, that the Messiah should for a while *be hid*, it seems more modern; and they must put a strange interpretation on Isa. liii. 8; Mic. v. 2; and Psal. cx. 4; to draw any such consequence from them, as Dr. Whitby and Mr. L'Enfant suppose they did.

SECT. C. John VII. 28.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

Then Jesus, though they said this in a private manner to each other, and imagined that he could not have heard them, *as he was teaching in the temple*, and at some distance from them, *cried out* with a louder voice than before, *and said, Do ye* indeed *both know me, and know from whence I am?*[b] Alas, it is great rashness and folly for you to assert it; and whatever you may object, *yet* it is most certain, that *I am not come of myself*, with vain and false pretences to a divine mission, nor do I want any proper evidences of it: *but he who sent me is true* to all his promises and predictions,[c] *whom*, nevertheless, with all your boasts, *ye know not.*

29 But I know him, for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

But I know him in a most intimate manner; *for* 29 *I am* sprung *from him*[d] by a mysterious and divine generation, in consequence of which I am infinitely better acquainted with him than you, or any mere creatures, can be; *and he hath sent me* among you, as his Ambassador, on an errand of the highest importance.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Then they were so provoked by this claim of 30 a divine original, and by the charge advanced against them, as ignorant of that God in whom they gloried as so peculiarly their own, that *they sought* an opportunity *to seize him*; *yet* God impressed their minds in such a manner, that *no one* of them would be the first that *laid hands on him:* and they were kept under this visible restraint, *because his* appointed *hour* of suffering *was not yet come*, but he had farther services in life to dispatch before he was delivered to them.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh,

And many of the people were so much affected 31 with these discourses, that they secretly *believed on him, and said* to each other, *When the Messiah comes, will* it be possible *he* should *do greater*

[b] *Do you both know me, and know whence I am?*] So Bishop Chandler would render these words; (see his Defence, p. 334;) and it seems necessary, in order to vindicate the propriety, and indeed the veracity, of the reply; unless with Beza and Camerarius we suppose it to be spoken ironically.

[c] *Is true* to all his promises and predictions.] There seems a reference here to the accomplishment of some of the *prophecies* already fulfilled in him, together with a cheerful *faith* in what was yet to come.

[d] *I am from him.*] I should have chosen to render παρ' αὐτῦ, *with him*, as I did in the first edition, to avoid a tautology; but I am sensible on farther reflection, that I want a sufficient authority for such a version. I therefore acquiesce in our own: but I see no occasion to vary any thing in the paraphrase, since in either sense it suggests so strong a reason for believing that Christ hath the most intimate knowledge of the Father.

SECT. c. *miracles than these which this* [*Jesus*] *has done* here at Jerusalem, and over the whole country?

will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

John VII. 32. This, however, could not be so privately said, but some information of it was sent to *the Pharisees*, who, when they *heard that the people whispered such things concerning him*, were greatly displeased, and alarmed at it: *and the Pharisees and* the other members of the grand sanhedrim, particularly *the chief priests* among whom there were many Sadducees (see Acts iv. 1,) *sent officers* from the chamber in which they held their council,[e] into the adjacent court of the temple, *to seize him*, as he preached there to the multitude.

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

33 *Then Jesus said to them*, as soon as they appeared, I know the design on which some of you are come, but God will not permit you immediately to execute it; for *yet a little while* longer *I am* to continue *with you, and* [*then*] *I* am to *go* again *to him that sent me.*

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

34 And when I am returned to him, I shall be tirely out of your reach; so that *you shall seek me, and* wish that you had me in your power again, but you *shall not find me, and where I am*, or where I shall then, and always be, *you cannot* possibly *come:* which he said, referring to his speedy exaltation to the heavenly world, and to the impotent malice with which they should then oppose his triumphant cause.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35 But he was not understood in that sense; *the Jews therefore* who were present *said among themselves, Whither is he about to go, that we shall not find him? Will he* leave Judea, and *go to the* remainders of the holy seed, who are *dispersed among the Greeks* and other nations? *and* will he *teach* them, or *the Greeks* themselves,[f]

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

[e] From the chamber in which they held their council.] See sect xxiv. note [f], Vol. I. p. 144.

[f] *Will he go to the dispersed among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?*] By Greeks we are here to understand idolatrous Gentiles, and not Hellenists, or Jews that used the Greek language; for these were the dispersed among them. There is therefore, I think, a sting in these words beyond what commentators have observed. They insinuate, that if he was to go into foreign countries, to address himself to the Jews there, who might be supposed not so well instructed as those that lived in Judea and at Jerusalem, he would not be able to make any proselytes, even among these; but would be constrained to apply himself to the ignorant and stupid Gentiles, to seek disciples among them; which to be sure appeared to these haughty scorners, one of the most infamous circumstances that could be imagined, and most incompatible with the character of the true Messiah.

even the idolatrous Gentiles, after his being thus rejected by his own nation at home and abroad? *What* [*sort of*] *saying is this which he has* now *spoken, You shall seek me, and shall not find me; and where I am, you cannot* possibly *come?* Thus they continued cavilling at his words; yet were so overawed by his presence, that they did not dare to offer him any violence, notwithstanding the commission with which some of them came.

SECT. C.

John VII. 36.

36 What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

IMPROVEMENT.

So confident is *error* in its own decisions, and so vain in its self-applauses! These unhappy people, every way mistaken, censure *their rulers* for a supposed credulity, in seeming, as it were, to acquiesce in *Christ*'s claim to be the *Messiah;* and imagined themselves, no doubt, exceeding wise in rejecting him, while they blindly took it for granted, he was the *son of Joseph*, and had not patience to wait for the authentic story of his miraculous conception Surely men had need to look well to the force of those arguments, on which they venture their souls by rejecting the gospel.

Verse 26, 27

Our Lord answered their *secret reasoning* in a manner which might justly have alarmed them, charging them with ignorance of *that God* whom they pretended to *know*, and whom, with a presumptuous confidence, they claimed as *theirs*. And oh, that it may not be found at last, that many who have appeared most confident of their interest in God, neither know him, nor are *known by him!*

28

The blessed *Jesus*, who is *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person*, has the completest *knowledge* of the *Father*. May we be so wise and happy, as to seek instructions from him, *that the eyes of our understandings may be enlightened*, and the temper of our hearts proportionably regulated, by all the discoveries of the Divine Being which he makes!

29

How obstinate and desperately hardened were the hearts of those who, notwithstanding all the proofs that *Jesus* gave of his *divine mission*, were yet so far from hearkening to him, as to *seek* opportunities *to destroy him!* So dangerous and fatal is the prevalence of *error*, in such as *like not to retain God in their knowledge*, that they will even venture on the greatest wickedness, when once they are *given over to a reprobate mind.* (Rom. i. 28.)—May God preserve us from *a spirit of delusion*, and fill us with that *wisdom*, that we may *know the things belonging to our peace;* and being ready to *receive the truth in the love of it*, may we acknowledge and attend to *Christ* as *sent of God!*

30, 32

SECT. C. Ver. 34. May we learn this heavenly wisdom in time, since the hour is approaching when *Christ* will be *sought in vain*, and all correspondence between him and sinners will be finally cut off! *Where he is, they cannot* then *come;* and to be excluded from him, will at length appear insupportable misery, even to those who, with proud folly and fatal self-sufficiency, are now most ready to say unto him, *Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of* thee, or *thy ways.* (Job xxi. 14.)

SECT. CI.

Christ invites his hearers to come and imbibe the spirit from him; and by these and other gracious discourses disarms the resolution of the officers, who return to the sanhedrim without him; where a short debate arises between Nicodemus and his brethren. John VII. 37, *to the end.*

JOHN VII. 37.

SECT. CI. John VII. 37. SUCH were the discourses which our Lord made to the people, in the presence of those who were sent by the sanhedrim to seize him; and this happened *in the* eighth and *last day, that great* [*day*] *of the feast* of tabernacles, when, according to the institution of Moses, (Lev. xxiii. 34, 36; Numb. xxix. 35;) there was to be an holy convocation, attended with some extraordinary sacrifices. Now, on this day, when it was customary for the priests to surround the altar with their palm-branches, and to pour out water in the temple, as an expression of the general desire of the Messiah's appearance, and the pouring forth of the Spirit by him,[a] *Jesus stood* on an eminence, that he might be the better heard and seen, *and proclaimed* with a loud voice, *saying, If any man thirst*, that is, if he ardently desire true happiness, and long for the blessings promised under the admini-

JOHN VII. 37. IN the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him

[a] When it was customary for the priests to pour out water, &c.] That there was a custom on this day of drawing water out of the fountain of Siloam, and pouring it out before the Lord in the temple, at the time of evening sacrifice; and that the priest who did it stood on some eminence, the Jewish Rabbies unanimously assure us. (See Reland's Antiq. Heb. part iv. cap. 6, § 6.) Some think it was intended to supplicate the former rain; but the context inclines me much rather to believe those Jewish writers, produced by Dr. Lightfoot (in his Hor. Heb. on this place), who say it was meant as a way of invoking the divine influences of the blessed Spirit, and as a mark of their desire of having it poured out upon them. See Tremellius's excellent note on this text.

SECT. CI.

John VII. 37

come unto me, and drink,

stration of the Messiah, *let him come unto me* by faith, *and drink* his fill; for I am most ready freely to communicate every needful blessing, and particularly those supplies of the Spirit which you profess so earnestly to desire. (Compare Isa. lv. 1.)

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

38 For *he that* truly *believeth on me, as the scripture hath* in many places *said* and promised,[b] shall receive those supplies in so great an abundance, that he shall not only be refreshed himself, but *out of his belly*, or from within him,[c] *shall flow* vital streams, and as it were, *rivers of living water*, for the refreshment and comfort of others.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

39 *Now this*, which was true in a more extensive sense, *he* peculiarly *spake of the Spirit*,[d] *which they who believed on him should receive*, and which some of them should also be enabled to communicate to others. But it was not then generally understood; *for the Holy Spirit was not yet* [*given*] in that extraordinary manner, *because Jesus was not yet glorified*; and it was the wise and gracious purpose of God to send him down on the church, after the ascension of Jesus, as a triumphant Conqueror, into his Father's presence. (See Eph. iv. 7—12; John xvi. 7; and Acts ii. 33.)

40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.

40 *Then many of the people, when they heard this* gracious *saying*, which was indeed a more free declaration and profession than he commonly made, *said, Surely this* [*man*] *is* at least *a prophet*,[e] and probably comes to introduce the

[b] *As the scripture hath* in many places *said* and promised] Chrysostom, and after him, many other eminent critics, refer this to the former clause, and understand it as if he had said, *He that hath that faith in me which the scripture requires:* (see Castalio, Zegerus, Jac. Cappellus, in loc.) And thus they avoid the difficulty, which arises from our not finding the following words in scripture.—But it seems much more natural, with Grotius, to suppose, that here is a general reference to the several prophecies which refer to the effusion of the Spirit by the Messiah under the similitude of pouring out water; and accordingly I have paraphrased the words in that view of the connection. See Isa. lii. 15; xliv. 3; lviii. 11; and Joel ii. 28.

[c] *Out of his belly*, or from within him.] The belly is frequently put for the mind or heart. Compare Job xv. 35; xx. 20; and Prov. xx. 27, 30.—It sometimes signifies, in a more general way, the inward part of a thing, (1 Kings vii. 20; Mat. xii. 40.) and may perhaps have some allusion here to the prominency of that capacious golden vase from which the water was now poured out in a large stream.

[d] *This he spake of the Spirit.*] It is strange that, when the evangelist has thus plainly commented on these words of Christ, a late eminent writer should venture to advance a different interpretation, and explain them as spoken of *the doctrine of the gospel.*

[e] *Surely this man is a prophet.*] As the article is prefixed, it might seem natural to render it *the prophet*, were it not afterwards distinguished from *the Christ.* On this account I conclude that here, as al-

SECT CI. John VII.

Messiah. And *others said*, Nay, *this is* certainly *the Messiah* himself; *but* in opposition to this, *some* objected, and *said, shall the Messiah*, when he appears, *come out of Galilee*, as we
42 know this Jesus of Nazareth does? *Hath not the scripture said*, expressly, *That the Messiah is to come from the seed of David? and* hath it not also added, that he is to arise *from the town of Bethlehem* Judah, *where David was* [*born*,] and which was the ancient seat of his family? (Compare Isa. xi. 1, and Mic. v. 2.)
43 And *thus* they were divided in their sentiments, and *there was a* warm *dissension*[f] *among the people on his account.*
44 And the officers also, who had been sent to apprehend him, were at a loss what they should do, *and some of them would have seized him*; *but* struck with the regard which several of the people expressed towards him, and, above all, impressed by the dignity and sweetness of his discourses, and the secret hand of heaven which wrought for his deliverance, they were so far restrained, that *no man laid hands on him.*
45 *Then the officers came* back *to the chief priests and* the *Pharisees*, without accomplishing the purpose for which they were sent: *and* when the sanhedrim perceived they had not executed their commission, *they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him* with you as your prisoner, according to the orders you received from us?
46 *The officers replied*, we could not find in our hearts to attempt it; for surely *no man* living *ever spake* in so engaging and irresistible a manner *as this man doth*,[g] and had you heard him

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee.

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

so John i. 21, ὁ προφήτης signifies only *a prophet*, that is, one of the ancient prophets revived. See sect. xx. note [c], Vol. I. p. 123.

[f] *A warm dissension.*] So I apprehend the word σχισμα always signifies. And thus the word schism, which is just the same, (with an English termination,) expresses not merely nor necessarily, a separation from each other, but an angry debate, whether it be, or be not, attended with separation.

[g] *No man ever spake as this man doth.*] Plutarch mentions it as a memorable proof of the extraordinary eloquence of Mark Antony, when Marius sent soldiers to kill him, that when he began παρακαλεῖσθαι τον Δικαίον, *to plead for his life*, he disarmed their resolution, and melted them into tears. (Plutarch Vit. p. 431.) But these officers are thus vanquished, merely by hearing Christ's gracious discourses to the people, which is a circumstance much more remarkable. They return in a kind of amaze, and, instead of seizing him as their prisoner, or making a laboured apology for their failure, only break out into a pathetic exclamation, that *no man in the world ever spake like him.* It is a reflection which I hope we often make, as we read his discourses.

yourselves, it must have disarmed your resentment against him.

SECT. CI.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

Then the Pharisees, far from being softened by the account they gave them, *answered them* in a scornful and upbraiding way, What, *are you also deceived* by his artful and popular address? Surely you cannot be so weak as to be thus infatuated? Pray consider the conduct of those who are most capable of judging of this point: *have any of the rulers believed on him, or [any] of the Pharisees* of a more private station?[h] Yet you know these are most eminent for their acquaintance with religion, and are the most authentic interpreters of the sacred writings in which it is contained: *But this* wretched herd of *people, who* are so enchanted with him, *know* and regard *not* any thing of the true meaning of *the law*, and, it is easy to be seen, *are cursed* with a judicial blindness, and given up to the most absurd and fatal mistake.[i]

John VII. 47

48 Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?

48

49 But this people who knoweth not the law, are cursed.

49

Upon this, *Nicodemus*, whom we before have mentioned as the person *who came to [Jesus] by night*, (see John iii. 1, *& seq.* Vol. I. p. 147;) *being* both a ruler and a Pharisee, and sitting in the sanhedrim as *one of them*, took so much courage, that he *said to them, Doth our law*, which you boast so much acquaintance with,[k] *judge* and condemn *any man before* the magistrate appointed to execute *it* summon him into his presence, that he may *hear* from *him* what he hath to say in his own defence,

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

50

51 Doth our law judge any man before it hear him, and

51

[h] *Have any of the rulers believed on him, or* any *of the Pharisees?*] I cannot think, with Grotius, that this is any intimation, that, if there were any of the Great Council who had favourable thoughts of Jesus, they were the Sadducees. The interpretation of the paraphrase is much easier. There is no reason to believe any of the Sadducees were inclined to receive the gospel; and if the Pharisees had secretly suspected them of such an inclination, they would hardly have affronted them by such an insinuation in this grand assembly, considering the high rank in which many of that sect were.

[i] *This people who know not the law, are cursed.*] I see no ground to think, with Grotius, that this refers to Deut. xxvii. 26, and is built on a supposition, that the ignorance of the populace must always expose them to a curse. It rather intimates an apprehension, that God had given them up to a spirit of fatal infatuation.—Instances of their contempt of the common people may be seen in Lightfoot, (Hor. Hebr. in loc.) and Vitringa, (Observ. Sacr. lib. iii. cap. 2, p. 498.)

[k] *Doth our law*, which you boast so much acquaintance with.] Soft as these words seem, there is a severe sting in them; and they in effect amount to a charge, that while they professed such a knowledge of the law, and zeal for it, they either knew not, or regarded not, some of its plainest precepts, and were even unmindful of those which, as they were a court of judicature, were their peculiar concern.

SECT. CI. *and know* from credible witnessess, *what he hath done* to deserve punishment? (See Deut. xvii. 8—11, and xix. 15, & *seq.*

know what he doth?

John VII. 52 But *they*, without entering farther into the argument, *answered him* only by *saying*, in a slight and superficial manner, What *art thou* thyself *also of Galilee*, that thou favourest the pretences of this contemptible Galilean? *Search* a little farther into the matter, *and* thou wilt soon *see* the unreasonableness of doing it; *for* it is notorious, even to a proverb, that *no prophet is raised up from Galilee*,[1] nor will God ever honour that contemptible country with such a production.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 *And*, having said this, they would not wait for a reply, but immediately broke up the court; and so *every one went* away *to his own house*.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 37 WITH what delight and thankfulness should we hear this gracious *proclamation of Christ*, which he now made in the *temple*, and a while after repeated from the *throne* of his glory! *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink*; yea, *whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely*; (Rev. xxii. 17.) Blessed *Jesus*, had we been allowed to have prescribed to thee a *form of words*, in which thy kind purposes towards us should have been expressed, what could we have invented more pathetic, more condescending, or more reviving!—May we *thirst* for the blessings of thy grace, and in the confidence of *faith* ap-
39 ply unto thee for them; and particularly for these communications of thy *Spirit*, which are so highly excellent and desirable, and indeed so necessary for us! Supply us with them, we intreat thee, in so rich an abundance, that we, in our different spheres, may supply others, and from us there may *flow rivers*
38 *of living water!*

40 Well might such *gracious words* as these disarm the rage of enemies and persecutors. Let us add our testimony to theirs, and say, *Never man spake as Jesus speaks*. Let us hear him

[1] *No prophet is raised up from Galilee.*] As it is plain that Jonah, and probable that Nahum also, was a Galilean, Sir Norton Knatchbull, and others, who imagine that these rulers could not be ignorant of that, suppose that προφήτης here signifies the Great Prophet, or Messiah. But probably, had this been their meaning, they would rather have quoted the text which mentions Bethlehem as the birth-place of the Messiah. The answer must therefore be acknowledged to be very mean and trifling, and the abrupt manner in which the assembly was broke up, seems to intimate their consciousness that it would not bear examination.

with calm, and thankful attention, while his voice still sounds in his word. Happy are those *that know the joyful sound!* (Psal. lxxxix. 15.) The *Pharisees*, like *deaf adders, stopped their ears* against *the voice of the Charmer;* and, while they proudly censured the *populace* as a brutal herd, and gloried in their own superior wisdom, *rejected the counsel of God:* rashly judging without serious inquiry, and weakly borne down by vulgar senseless *prejudices* against *names* and *places*, which is all *the senate of Israel* opposes to the solid argument of *Nicodemus!* That good man, already considerably improved by his interview with *Jesus*, was undoubtedly confirmed in his adherence to him, by observing the methods of their opposition: and where magistrates arm their *authority* to overbear *argument*, they will probably, in the judgment of impartial men, produce a suspicion, at least, that they know their cause to be incapable of a rational defence.

SECT. CI. Verse 48, 49 — 51, 52 — 53

SECT. CII.

Christ, having spent the night in retirement, returns to the temple, where an adulteress is brought before him; but he avoids giving judgment in her case, and turns the consciences of his enemies on themselves. John VIII. 1—11.

JOHN VIII. 1.

JESUS went unto the mount of Olives.

JOHN VIII. 1.

THUS the Pharisees debated the case, *and* in such dissension their assembly broke up; but *Jesus*, choosing to retire in the evening, that he might by secret converse with his heavenly Father be animated to all the labours and dangers before him, *went* up *to* a mountain in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, which lay to the east of the city, on the other side of the brook Cedron, and is well known by the name of *the Mount of Olives*, where he spent the night in meditation and prayer.

SECT. CII. John VIII. 1.

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple; and all the people came unto him, and

But, that his retirement might not break in upon the opportunity of public service, which the present concourse of people gave him, *he returned to the temple early in the morning; and all the people* who *came to* worship there before they returned to their respective habitations in the country (the feast being now ended) flocked around *him* to receive his instructions; *and*, such was his courage and zeal, notwithstanding the late conspiracy which had been

2

SECT. CII. John VIII. 3

formed against him, that, *sitting down* in one of the cloisters, *he instructed them* as freely as he had ever done.

he sat down and taught them.

And, while he was engaged in this exercise, *the scribes and Pharisees brought to him a woman* who had just been *taken in* the commission of *adultery*,[a] having been unhappily betrayed into it among those intemperances which too often attend public feasts; *and*, as the court of judicature, before whom she should have been tried, was not yet assembled, they took that opportunity of laying a snare for Jesus, by *setting her* before him, *in the midst* of the people who were attending his discourse. And, as if they were desirous of information from him, *they* craftily *said unto him*, *Master*, as thou professest thyself an extraordinary Teacher, we desire thou wouldest pronounce thy judgment on *this* case: here is a *woman* who *was taken in the very act of adultery: Now Moses in the law has commanded us, that such* infamous *women should be stoned*,[b] (Lev. xx. 10, and Deut. xx. 22;) but, as thou takest upon thee either to supersede many of his precepts, or to interpret

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act:

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should

[a] *Brought to him a woman taken in adultery.*] It is well known that this story is wanting in the Syriac version, as well as in the Alexandrian and Bodleian copies, and indeed in most of the oldest manuscripts; which engaged Beza to question, and Le Clerc, with many others, to reject its authority. But I acquiesce in the reasoning of the learned Dr Mill, to whom I refer the reader for the arguments to prove it *authentic*; the critical examination of these matters lying quite out of the sphere of my present design. A mistaken apprehension that some circumstances in the story were indecent, and an excessive rigour with respect to those who had fallen into this truly detestable crime, might perhaps be the occasion of this omission, if it was not accidental in some early copies. Erasmus conjectures it might be added by St. John, after some copies of his gospel had been taken; and Grotius, that some who heard the story from the apostle's mouth recorded it with the approbation of Papias, and other eminent persons in the church.—The notice that Eusebius, (Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. ult.), Jerom, (adv. Pelag. lib. ii. cap. 6), and other ancient writers, have taken of the dubiousness of this passage, with a few other instances of the like nature, shews that critical exactness with which they examined into the genuineness of the several parts of the New Testament, and so, on the whole, strengthens the evidence of Christianity, which (as I have shewn at large in the ninth of my Ten Sermons) is so inseparably connected with the genuineness and purity of the New Testament.

[b] *Such women should be stoned.*] If they spoke accurately, this must have been a woman who had been betrothed to a husband and had been guilty of this infamous crime, before the marriage was completed; for such only are expressly condemned to be *stoned*. (Deut. xxii. 22—24.) The Jewish writers tell us, that when (as in the case of other adulteries,) only death in general was denounced, without specifying the particular kind of it, *strangling* was to be used. Custom indeed (as Grotius observes,) might have introduced *stoning* in all these cases; (compare Ezek. xvi. 38, 40;) yet that would not justify what they here say. But our Lord's spirit was too noble to take the advantage of such a slip, if it was a mistake: he had a much greater view, and silenced them in a far more effectual manner.

be stoned, but what sayest thou?

6 This they said tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.—

them in a very singular manner, we would be glad to hear thy determination in an affair of so great importance; *what therefore dost thou say?* *This they said tempting him, that,* which way soever he should determine, *they might have* an opportunity *to accuse him;* either to the Jewish rulers, if he acquitted such a criminal; or to the Romans, if he ventured, though on the authority of the law, to pronounce a capital sentence against her, which he had no authority from the Romans to do,[c] and which the Jewish rulers themselves had at present no power to execute. (Compare John xviii. 31.)

SECT. CIX. John VIII. 6

—But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

7 So when they continued asking him, he lift up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

But Jesus, stooping down, wrote something *on the ground with his finger,*[d] choosing (as it were) to speak to them by that action, rather than by words. *But as they,* thinking that they had him at a great advantage, *continued asking* 7 *him* with greater importunity, *he raised himself up, and,* without replying directly to their demand, only *said to them, Let him of you that is without sin,* in this or any other respect, pursue the prosecution, and *throw the first* fatal *stone at her,* when she is condemned:[e] (com-

[c] *To accuse him*—to the Romans, if he ventured, &c.] It is very evident that the Jewish sanhedrim sat by licence from the Roman governor; and though they had a right to try capital causes, it was necessary (as it seems from passages elsewhere examined,) that the sentence they passed should be recognized and allowed by the Romans before it could be carried into execution. (See sect. clxxxvi. note [c], on Mat. xxvii. 2, and sect. clxxxviii. note [h], on John xix. 10.) For Christ therefore to have undertaken the decision of this case, would *ipso facto* have rendered him obnoxious to the Romans, as well as to the sanhedrim: and had he condemned her, a new occasion of offence must have arisen, in consequence of that—to Pilate, if execution had been ordered without an application to him,—and to the Jews, if Christ had directed such an application to be made. So that the snare here was much the same with that afterwards laid for him, (Matt. xxii. 17—22, sect. cliv.) in the question about the lawfulness of paying tribute.

[d] *Wrote on the ground with his finger.*] The following words, μη προσποιουμενος, *as though he heard them not,* or (as I would render them,) *as not regarding them,* are wanting in the most valuable manuscripts. Dr. Mill therefore, I think justly, omits them, as several other printed editions of the Greek Testament do. Were they admitted, they would cut off most of the *conjectures* which learned men have advanced as to *what Christ wrote;* a question which it is impossible for us to determine, and which we have no need at all to be solicitous about. I am inclined to think there was a language in the *action* itself, either to intimate that these hypocritical Pharisees should be themselves (as the prophet expresses it, Jer. xvii. 13,) written in the earth, or that they were to attend to what was written: but I can determine nothing, and must say with a great critic on these words, *Nescire velle, quæ Magister optimus nescire nos vult, erudita inscitia est:* "To "be willing to continue ignorant of what "our great Master has thought fit to "conceal, is no inconsiderable part of "Christian learning."

[e] *Let him of you that is without sin, throw the first stone at her.*] Le Clerc makes the supposed impropriety of this reply a

SECT. CII.

pare Deut. xvii. 7.) thus prudently avoiding a decision of the case, and leading them to reflect on their own guilt. *And stooping down again,* John VIII. 8 *he wrote on the ground,* as he had done before, and left them to their own reflections.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 *But having heard* [*his answer*], *and being,* by a secret energy which went along with the word of Jesus, in a very awful and powerful manner, *convicted in their consciences* of their own personal and aggravated guilt, *they* were ashamed even to look each other in the face; and so *went out one by one, beginning from the eldest,*[f] whose age and office tended to increase their shame and remorse; and the impression passed *even to the last,* or the youngest and meanest of them. *And Jesus was left alone* by all the accusers, *and the woman standing in the midst* of the crowd, with which he had been surrounded before she was brought in.

9 And they which heard *it,* being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 *And Jesus raising himself up, and seeing none* of those who had been soliciting his judgment, *but* only *the woman* they had brought before him, *said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Has no man condemned thee,* or is there none remaining to bear witness against thee? *And she said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I* take upon me, at this time, and under this circumstance, judicially to *condemn thee,* though thy crime has been undoubtedly great: *go thy way* therefore, without any impediment from me; but, as the Messenger of God, *and* Friend of

10 When Jesus had lift up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn

farther argument against the genuineness of this text; since the law did not require the *witnesses* or *executioners* to be *free from sin,* in order to the efficacy of such a prosecution. But it may be answered, that our Lord's certain knowledge of what the effect would be, vindicated the wisdom of his putting the matter upon this issue, by which it is plain in fact he escaped their snare.

[f] *Went out one by one, beginning from the eldest.*] It is strange any should have interpreted this clause so rigorously, as to imagine that every particular person went out just according to *his age.* It seems only to intimate that those *eldiers* of the people, who had been most eager in the prosecution, appeared under the most sensible confusion, and were some of *the first* that left the assembly. And in this view it is very remarkable; especially considering that they were now in the presence of the multitude, before whom they would no doubt be desirous to keep up the strictest appearance of virtue, in order to maintain their influence over them.—Though (as Dr Whitby shews, on ver. 7,) adultery prevailed much among the Jews about this time, yet I see no reason to conclude that their consciences convicted every one of them of this particular crime.—Their partiality (as Dr. Lardner well observes,) seems to appear in bringing only the woman, not the man, when the law condemned both. (Lard. Credibil. part i. Vol. I. p. 79.)

thee; go, and sin no more.

souls, I warn thee, that thou *sin no more*;[g] for such enormous practices as these must subject thee to a severer judgment from God, than man can pronounce or inflict. SECT. CII. John VIII. 11

IMPROVEMENT.

THE devout *retirements* of *Christ*, and his early renewed *labours*, so often come in view, that, after having made some progress in his history, we are ready to pass them over as things of course. But let us remember, that in some degree they call upon us *to go and do likewise*; and will another day condemn those who, while they call themselves *his disciples*, are given up to ease and luxury, and suffer every little amusement or sensual gratification, to lead them into an *omission* of their duty to God and their fellow-creatures; an *omission* especially aggravated in those whom he has appointed to be *teachers* of others, and who have therefore so many peculiar errands to the throne of grace, and so many engagements *in the morning to sow*, or to prepare *the seed* of religious instruction, *and in the evening not to withhold their hand* from dispensing it. (Eccles. xi. 6.) Verse 1, 2

While *Jesus is teaching*, his *enemies* address him, not only as an *instructor*, but as a *judge*: and yet, by this specious form of honour and respect, they sought only to *ensnare* and *destroy him*. So unsafe would it be always to judge of mens intentions by the first appearances of their actions! But our Lord, in his answer, united, as usual, the *wisdom of the serpent* with the *innocence* and gentleness *of the dove*; and in his conduct to *this criminal*, shewed at once that tenderness and faithfulness, which might have the most effectual tendency to impress and reclaim her; if a heart capable of such infidelity and wickedness could be impressed and reclaimed at all. *Go thy way*, said he to this adulteress, *and sin no more*. Perhaps the charge may have little weight with such abandoned transgressors as she; but let all learn to improve their escapes from danger, and the continued exercise of divine patience towards them, as an engagement to speedy and thorough reformation. 3, 5 6 7 10, 11

Let the *force of conscience*, and the *power of Christ* over it, (both which so evidently appeared in this instance,) teach us to 9

[g] *Sin no more.*] Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 318.) and Suicer, (Thesaur. Vol. I. p. 205.) have shewn that the word ἁμαρτάνειν, *to sin*, is used by the most elegant Greek classics, (as the correspondent word *peccare* is by the Latin) to signify *the commission of adultery*; which strongly intimates, that even the light of nature taught many of the Heathens the exceeding sinfulness of it: which is the more worthy of notice, as not only the greatest of their men, but (according to their scandalous theology,) the greatest of their gods too, gave it all the sanction it could have from example.

SECT. CII. reverence the dictates of our own minds, and to do nothing to bring them under a sense of guilt; which, through the secret energy of our *Redeemer*, wrought so powerfully on these *Pharisees*, that, hypocritical and vain-glorious as they were, they could not command themselves so far as even to save appearances; but the *eldest* and *gravest* among them were *the first* to confess their guilt, by withdrawing from the presence of so holy a *Prophet*, from the *temple* of God, and from the *criminal* whom they came to prosecute. A like consciousness of being *ourselves to blame*, will abate the boldness and freedom of our proceedings with *others* for their faults, if, while we *judge* them, we are *self-condemned*; nor will the authority of a superior *age*, or *station* of life, bear us out against these *inward reproaches*.

SECT. CIII.

Our Lord speaks of himself as the light of the world, urges the concurrent testimony of his Father, and gives the Jews repeated warning of the danger they would incur by persisting in their infidelity. John VIII. 12—29.

JOHN VIII. 12.

SECT. CIII. John VIII. 12 *THEN Jesus*, after the interruption that he met with while he was speaking to the people in the temple, by the Pharisees bringing in the adulteress, resumed the work he was before engaged in, and *again* proceeded to instruct the people; and observing the sun lately risen, and shining with great lustre and beauty, he *spake unto them, saying, I am the* true *light of the world*, in whose appearance you ought chiefly to rejoice:[a] this sun arises, in a few hours to descend again, and may fail many of you before your intended journey is dispatched;[b] whereas *he that follows me*, and governs himself by the dictates of my word and Spirit, *shall not* be left to *walk in* the *darkness* of ignorance, error, and sin, *but shall have the light of life* continually shining upon him, to diffuse over his soul know-

JOHN VIII. 12. THEN spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

[a] *I am the* true *light of the world.*] The Messiah was often represented under this view. Isa. xlii. 6; xlix. 6; and Mal. iv. 2. Compare Luke ii. 32; John i. 4—9; iii. 19; ix. 5; and xii. 46.

[b] The sun arises to descend again, and may fail many of you, &c.] The reader will remember this was the morning after the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, and probably might be before the morning sacrifice: after which, no doubt, many would be setting out for their habitations in the country.

ledge, holiness, and joy, till he is guided by it to eternal happiness. SECT. CIII.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

Some of *the Pharisees therefore*, who were then present, but different persons from those who had brought in the woman, enraged at the late disappointment of their brethren, *said unto him, Thou bearest witness of thyself*, and therefore, by thine one confession (chap. v. 31), *thy testimony is not* to be admitted as *true*, but may rather be suspected of vain-glory; nor can we believe such great things of thee, unless we have some farther proof than thine own affirmation. John VIII. 13

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I indeed *bear witness of myself*, [*yet*] as I speak from my own certain knowledge, and have already shewn that I am come with a divine commission, *my testimony is* entirely and perfectly *true*, and as such you ought to admit it, *for I* well *know from whence I came, and whither I am going*, and the most evident demonstrations of it have been given you, both in the nature of my doctrine, and in the miracles which I have wrought among you: *but you* are so perverse, that, as often as I have hinted or declared it, you *know not* to this day *from whence I come, and whither I am going:* 14

15 Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man.

Which is not to be ascribed to the want of sufficient evidence, but merely to the force of your own prejudices; for *you judge according to the* maxims of *flesh* and sense, and will believe nothing in opposition to these principles which you have so rashly imbibed,[c] and by this means are justly liable to condemnation: but I wave that for the present, as *I* now *judge no man*, but rather appear under the character of a Saviour. (Compare chap iii. 17.) 15

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

Yet if I should *judge, my* determination and *sentence is* apparently *true* and right, and you would justly be condemned for not receiving my testimony; *for I am not alone* in what I say, *but I and the Father that sent me*, as we are in other respects inseparably united, do evidently concur toge- 16

[c] *You judge according to the flesh*, &c.] The same carnal prejudices still prevail in the minds of the Jews, and prevent their reception of Christ; they laying it down as a first principle, that *he is to be a great temporal Prince and Deliverer.* And the admission of false principles, which are constantly taken for granted, and never examined, will, I fear, be attended with fatal consequences to thousands more.

SECT. CIII. John VIII. 17

ther in the testimony that I give. *And it is written in your* own *law*, for which you profess so sacred a regard, *that the testimony of two men is* to be admitted as *true*, and matters of the greatest consequence are without scruple to be determined by it. Deut. xvii. 6, and xix. 15.) Now *I am* [*one*] *who bear* this *witness of myself*, in a fact, the truth of which I cannot but certainly know; *and the Father who sent me* is another, and surely a most credible Person, who also *bears* his *testimony to me*; thereby asserting the truth of every doctrine I teach, and the justice of every sentence I might pass.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

19 *Then said they to him, Where is* this *thy Father*, to whom thou so frequently appealest? mention him plainly, that we may know how far he is to be regarded, and produce him as a witness. *Jesus answered*, You may well ask; for it plainly appears by your conduct, that *you neither know me, nor my Father*, however you may boast an acquaintance with him: and indeed, *if you had known me* aright, and regarded me as you ought to have done, *you would also* long ere this *have known* who and what *my Father* is, in another manner than you now do; for I bear his complete resemblance, and it is my great business to reveal him to those who submit to my instructions.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

20 *These words Jesus spake* with the greatest freedom, *as he was teaching in the temple, in* a certain part of it called *the treasury*, where the chests stood in which the people put their gifts for the service of that sacred house, (see Mark xii. 41, sect. clix.) the stores of which were laid up in chambers over that cloister: and though he so plainly intimated that God was his Father, and charged the Jews with being ignorant of him, in whom they boasted as so peculiarly their God, *yet* their spirits were kept under such a powerful, though secret restraint, that *no one seized him*; which was the more wonderful, as it was a place from whence it would not have been easy to have escaped without a miracle, and which was much frequented by his greatest enemies: but the true reason was, *because his hour was not yet come* in which he was, by divine permission, to be delivered into their hands.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.

SECT. CIII.

John VIII. 21

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Confiding therefore in the protection of Divine Providence, *Jesus then said to them again*, as he had done before (chap. vii. 33, 34. p. 52), *I am* speedily *going away* from among you, *and you shall seek me, and* enquire after the Messiah in vain; but, as a just punishment for your having rejected me, you *shall die in* this *your sin*, and perish for your unbelief by a singular stroke of Divine vengeance, which shall sink you into final condemnation. Remember then, that I have warned you with the greatest faithfulness, and now again I solemnly repeat the warning, That though you should be ever so desirous of admittance to me, it will be in vain; for *you cannot come* to the place *whither I am* now *going*, either to molest me, or to secure yourselves.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself; because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come?

The Jews then said, with a very perverse and foolish contempt, What, *will he kill himself, that he says, You cannot come whither I am going?* We shall not desire to follow him upon those terms. 22

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world, I am not of this world.

And he said to them yet more plainly, So vile and malicious an insinuation as this, evidently shews that *you are from beneath*, the slaves of earth, and the heirs of hell; while, on the other hand, *I am from above*, and shall quickly return thither: *you are* originally *of this world*, and your treasure and hearts are here; but as *I am not of this world*, my thoughts therefore naturally turn to that celestial abode from whence I came, and I incessantly labour to conduct men thither. 23

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

But as to you I labour in vain: and *therefore I* just now *said unto you, that you shall die in your sins*; and it is really a great and awful truth, and deserves another kind of regard than you give it; so that I yet again would call you to consider it; *for if you believe not that I am* [*he*], whom I have represented myself to be,[d] *you shall* unavoidably *die in your sins*, and are in effect the murderers of your own souls.[e] 24

[d] *That I am he*, &c. ὅτι ἐγω εἰμι.] There is evidently an ellipsis here, to be supplied by comparing it with ver. 12. Compare John xiii. 19; Mark xiii. 6; and Acts xiii. 25.

[e] Are in effect the murderers of your own souls.] The repetition of the threatening here, from ver. 21. is a very awful rebuke to the folly of their answer, ver. 22; as if our Lord had said, "It "very ill becomes you to trifle and "amuse yourselves with such silly and "spiteful turns, when your life, even "the life of your souls, is at stake, and

SECT. CIII. John VIII. 25

Then said they to him, in proud derision, *Who art thou*, that such great regard should be paid to thee, and that it should be so fatal a thing to neglect thee? *And Jesus said to them, Truly, because I am* still *speaking to you* to this very day in so plain and affectionate a manner, *I have many things to say and judge concerning you*,[f] and justly might upbraid you with the utmost severity, and pass an immediate sentence of condemnation upon you: *but*, for the present, I content myself with reminding you, that *he who sent me is true: and*, as *I speak to the world* only *those things which I have heard from him*, he will finally verify my words, and it will be at the peril of your souls if you continue to treat me with such perverseness and contempt.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true: and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 These things were very intelligible, when compared with what he had said before; [*yet*] so exceeding stupid were they, and so blinded by the prejudices of their minds, that *they did not understand that he spake to them of* God *the Father* as the Person who sent him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 *Jesus therefore said to them*, I know that, notwithstanding all I have said, you will be still so obstinate as to persist in your infidelity, till you proceed even to take away my life; but *when*, after all your professed desire of his ap-

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When

" to talk of my killing myself, when by " your unbelief and impenitency, you " are plunging yourselves into eternal " death." Thus do those passages in our Lord's discourses, which to a careless reader might seem flat tautologies, appear, on an attentive review, to be animated with a most penetrating Spirit, and to be full of Divine dignity. A remark which will frequently occur, especially in reading those important discourses of Christ, which John has, through the infinite goodness of God to his church, recorded after they had been omitted by the other evangelists.

[f] *Truly, because I am* still *speaking to you, I have many things to say and judge concerning you.*] I entirely agree with the learned Raphelius, (Annot. ex Herod. p. 292—303.) that all the difficulty of these words arises from a mistake in the *pointing*, as they stand in most copies; and I think his method of restoring the true reading and sense, the easiest and justest I have ever met with. He would point them thus, Την αρχην, ὁτι και λαλω υμιν, πολλα εχω περι υμων λαλειν και κρινειν. All that know any thing of the Greek language, know that την αρχην often signifies *indeed*, or *truly*; and so the translation I have given is very literal, and makes a very good sense.—Mr Fleming would render it, *I am, as I said unto you, The Beginning*, that is, the Person spoken of, Gen. i. 1, and elsewhere, under that title: but this, as well as our own version, is not any thing like a just and grammatical translation; though to be sure there is a sense in which Christ may most properly be called *the Beginning*. Compare Col. i. 18; Rev. i. 8; xxi. 6; xxii. 13. (see Fleming's Christology, Vol. I. p. 281.)—I shall only add, that some would render it, *The same I am speaking to you of:* but the version here given is more agreeable to the original, and by a proper *pointing* would appear natural and easy, if what should be considered as one sentence had not been separated into two parts by a wrong *division* of the verses.

ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and that I do nothing of myself, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

pearance and kingdom, *you shall have lifted up* that glorious Person, *the Son of man*, from the earth, and hath even proceeded so far as to put him to a violent death, instead of seeing his cause and interest overborne by that outrageous attempt, *you shall then know*, by some new and convincing token *that I am* [*he*,[g]] *and* [*that*] *I do nothing* separately *of myself, but*, in exact agreement with him, *speak* all *these things according as my Father has instructed me: And* even now *he that sent me is* graciously present *with me*, to bear his testimony to the truth of what I say, and to support and vindicate me: and whatsoever you may foolishly surmise, *the Father has not left me alone*, nor will he ever leave me; *for I always do the things which are* most *pleasing to him*, and faithfully and constantly pursue the important work which he has committed to my trust.

SECT. CIII. John VIII. 28

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him.

29

IMPROVEMENT.

SUCH may our character ever be, as we desire the supports of the Divine presence! Whoever be displeased, may we *always do the things which please him:* and with all diligence let us *labour, whether present* in the body, *or absent* from it, to be still approved and *accepted of him!* (2 Cor. v. 9.)

Ver. 29.

Our blessed *Redeemer* is *the light of the world.* With how much pleasure should we behold his rays! With how much cheerfulness should we *follow*, whithersoever he leads us; as well knowing, that we shall not then *walk in darkness:* and God forbid we should ever choose to continue in it, as the shelter and screen of wicked works! 12

May we, with all candour and humility, regard and submit to *the testimony* which *the Father has borne to him* in so express and incontestible a manner! Dreadful would be the consequence of our refusing to do it. The doom of these wretched *Jews* would be ours, *to die in our sins.* And oh, how insupportable will that guilty burden prove in a dying hour, and before the tribunal of God? How will it sink us into condemnation and despair! In vain shall those who now despise him, then *seek* ad- 17, 18 21, 24

[g] *You shall then know that I am he.*] This undoubtedly refers to the prodigies attending his death, his resurrection and ascension, the descent of the Spirit, the amazing miracles wrought by the apostles in his name. &c.—But I am careful not to put such words into our Lord's mouth in the paraphrase, as would have been unsuitable to the reserve which, on some of these heads, prudence obliged him to keep: or such as in other instances would have superseded farther inquiry into the meaning of what he said. I think it most natural to refer these to the notes, or to the paraphrase on some following passage.

SECT. CIII.

mittance to the world where he is: *thither they cannot come*; and if excluded from *him*, must be excluded from happiness.

Ver. 25. Justly might it long since have been our case; for surely he *has many things to say* of us, *and to judge concerning us*, should 26 he *lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet*, after his having been *so long with us*, yea, after we have, as it were, seen him *lifted up* and *set forth* as *crucified among us!* (Gal. iii. 1.)

28 May this faithful *admonition* prevail to our conviction and reformation; that our everlasting condemnation may not farther illustrate the reasonableness, yea, the necessity of it, and the madness of hardening our hearts against it!

SECT. CIV.

Our Lord continues his discourse with the Jews in the treasury, the day after the feast of tabernacles; and labours to convince them how vain their pretences to liberty and to the privileges of the children of Abraham were, while they continued to reject and persecute him, John VIII. 30—47.

JOHN VIII. 30.

SECT. CIV.

THUS did Jesus warn the Jews of the danger of rejecting him, and appeal to his heavenly Father as authorizing the whole of his administration; and, *as he was speaking these words*, *many* of his hearers were so struck with them, that they *believed in him*,[a] and were strongly inclined to follow him as the Messiah.

John III. 30.

JOHN VIII. 30.

AS he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 *Then Jesus*, knowing the weakness and treachery of the human heart, and the difficulties which would lie in the way, if they attempted to put that inclination into practice, *said to those* of the *Jews who* were now ready to profess that they *believed in him*, *If you continue* sted-

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue

[a] *Many believed in him.*] One can hardly think, that the ambiguity of the expression of *the Son of man's being lifted up*, (ver. 28) engaged them to this, in hope that it might intimate some exaltation to a temporal kingdom. It is more reasonable to believe that, they felt their hearts impressed with what they heard from him in the whole preceding discourse. Yet it is observable, that in the series of it he advances no new proof of his mission; so that probably these people were wrought upon, by what they observed in the temper and conduct of Christ; bearing the perverseness of his enemies with so much patience, speaking of an ignominious and painful death with such holy composure, and expressing so genuine and lively a sense of his heavenly Father's approbation, and so sweet a complacency in it.—And perhaps, would ministers generally allow themselves to open with freedom the native workings of a heart deeply impressed with the gospel, the secret charm might subdue those, whose subtlety and prejudice might be proof against the most conclusive abstract reasoning.

in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

fast *in* your adherence to *my word*, and yield a constant and universal obedience to it, [*then*] *you are my disciples indeed*, and I will finally own you as such. *And you shall* then *know the truth* of my gospel in its full compass and extent, so far as it is necessary to your salvation, or conducive to your comfort; *and the truth shall make you free*,[b] and fix you in that state of glorious liberty which is the privilege of my disciples alone.

SECT. CIV. John VIII. 32

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

But some that heard him were not a little displeased at this, as an insinuation that they were not already free; and strangely forgetting the servitude of Egypt and Babylon, and how often their nation had been conquered by others, and even how low it was at present reduced by the Roman power, *they* confidently *answered him*, *We are the seed of Abraham*, a person always free, and the peculiar favourite of heaven; *and* we *have never been in slavery to any man* whatever, nor do we fear that God will permit us to be so: *how* then *dost thou say* to us, *You shall be made free* upon becoming my disciples? 33

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.

Jesus, waving what he might easily have replied as to their former history, and the present state of their civil affairs, that he might give no unnecessary offence, *answered them*, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, and recommend it to your consideration as a most important truth, *That every one who* habitually *practises sin*,[c] and goes on in a course of it, *is the slave of sin*; and that is a servitude by far meaner and more dreadful than the yoke of an earthly tyrant. 34

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever:

Now, as *the servant does not always abide in the family* of his master, but is at his lord's pleasure liable to be dismissed or transferred to another; 35

[b] *The truth shall make you free.*] According to Sir Isaac Newton (on Proph. p. 149,) these words were spoken in a sabbatical year, when at the feast of tabernacles, which was just about the beginning of the civil year, great numbers of servants were set at liberty: and he supposes that the answer of the Jews, (ver. 33,) is to be explained with a peculiar reference to this, and contains two distinct thoughts: "*We are Abraham's* "*seed*, and consequently, had we ever "been in bondage, we should have been "set at liberty at this season, though "*Gentile slaves* are still detained; and, "besides that, *we never were in bondage* "*to any man* at all." But the arguments by which this is fixed to a sabbatical year are dubious; and the words will make a good sense, independent on this peculiar interpretation; which yet seemed remarkable enough to deserve a mention here.

[c] *Who* habitually *practises sin.*] Ποιων αμαρτιαν seems a phrase of the very same import with *working iniquity*: I have therefore rendered it *practises sin*, as that word generally signifies an habitual course of action.

SECT. CIV. John VIII. 35

much less can you, who are the servants, not of God, but of sin, promise yourselves that you shall still, on account of your descent from Abraham, continue in those privileges which, by undeserved mercy, you hitherto enjoy: [*but*] *the* eldest *son* and heir of the family continually *abides* in his father's house, and his power and influence [*there*] are *always* increasing.[d] Thus do I ever continue, and have power of receiving whom I will into the family: *if therefore* I, who am *the* Only-begotten *Son* of God, and the Heir of all things, *make you free, you*, claiming in virtue of my right and authority, *will be free indeed*,[e] and will not only be delivered from the bondage of corruption and the tyranny of Satan, but be entitled to those immunities and blessings here, and to that future inheritance of eternal glory, to which at present you have no claim.

but the son abideth ever.

36 If the son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 And as to what you say, that you are Abraham's seed, *I know that you indeed are*, in a natural way, *the posterity of Araham*,[f] as Ishmael also was; *but* what can that avail you, while you are so unlike Abraham in your temper, and are so far from being of a disposition suitable to your descent from him, that *you* not only deride, but *seek to kill me, because my word has no place in* your hearts, and has not any weight or influence upon *you*, but is of a tenor directly contrary to your prejudices and lusts. And, on the whole, there is so great a difference between us, that it is really impossible to reconcile your practice with my doctrine; for *I speak that which I have seen with my Father*, and which I know to be agreeable to his mind and will;

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and

[d] *The servant does not always abide in the family; but the son abides* [*there*] *always.*] I think Dr. Guyse's ingenious and pious paraphrase and note on these words, contain an excellent illustration of them. The main sense of what he says on this passage is much the same with what I have given above, (much as I had writ it several years ago:) the casting out Ishmael, though a son of Abraham by the bond oman, beautifully illustrates the remark and the connection.—It is strange that Dr. Claget should think, that Moses was *the servant* here meant; and stranger yet, that Dr. Clarke should adopt so unnatural an interpretation. See his Sermons, Vol. III. p. 4, 5.

[e] *If the Son make you free*, &c.] Archbishop Tillotson (Vol. III. p. 578.) thinks that this alludes to a custom in some of the cities of Greece, and elsewhere, whereby the son and heir had a liberty to adopt brethren, and give them the privileges of the family.

[f] *I know that you are the posterity of Abraham.*] It seems probable that our Lord speaks this, not to those who believed in him, but to some others in the company; and that the phrase, *They answered him*, ver. 33, only signifies, that some of those who were present made such a reply.

ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

and you do that which you have seen with your father, and shew a visible conformity in your works to him: by which he intimated that their works as much resembled the nature of the devil, as his doctrine answered to that of God.

SECT. CIV. John VIII 38.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.—

But *they replied* with some warmth, *and said to him*, Take heed on whom this reflection may fall; for *Abraham is our father*, and surely thou wouldest not insinuate any thing to the injury of that holy patriarch's memory, who was expressly called the friend of God. 39

—Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

Jesus says to them, If you were indeed, and in the most important sense, *the children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham*, and would make it the great business of your life to imitate so wise and so holy an example.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a Man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

But now you seek and contrive *to slay me, a* blameless and innocent *Man*, for no other reason but because I am one *who has* faithfully *told you the truth, which I have heard* and received in commission *from God: Abraham*, your boasted ancestor, *did not* any thing like *this*; but gave the readiest credit, and the most joyful welcome, to all the messages which God sent him. 40

41 Ye do the deeds of your father.—

Nevertheless, though you are so far from doing the works of Abraham, I may well say, as I have just now intimated, (ver. 38,) that *you do the works of* him who is indeed *your father*. 41

—Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

Then said they to him, We would have thee to know that *we are not born of fornication*; we are not bastard Jews, whose blood has been contaminated with idolatrous alliances; but, by virtue of our descent from his people, and our profession of his religion, *we have* all *one* great and common *Father*, [*which is*] *God*.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth, and came from God;

Jesus said to them, If God were indeed *your Father*, as you pretend, instead of attempting to take away my life, *you would* honour and *love me: for*, to speak without any reserve on this important head, I renew the declaration, That *I proceeded* originally, *and do come from God*,[s] 42

[s] *I proceeded* originally, *and do come from God.*] This seems to be the proper distinction between εξηλθον and ηκω. The seventy (as several commentators have observed,) use *the first* of these words to express the descent of children from their parents; (compare Gen. xv. 4; xxxv. 11; and Isa. xi. 1.) The form in which the *other* stands, favours the rendering I have given, *(do come from God,)* and may intimate not only his first mission, but his exact attendance to every particular message.

SECT. CIV. John VIII 43.

and appear among you as his Messenger; *for I came not of myself, but He has sent me*, and I constantly keep his commission in view. And *why do you not understand* this *my language*, and acknowledge it, simple as it is, to be indeed divine? [*Is it*] *because you cannot hear my word?*[h] Can you pretend to say that I decline giving you the most public and frequent instructions, or that those instructions are unintelligible and obscure? Your consciences in general know the contrary as to the main series of them.

neither came I of myself; but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

44 The case indeed is sufficiently plain, nor do I fear to represent it in the most express terms: I tell you therefore, *You are* the genuine children *of your father the devil*;[i] *and the* malicious and abominable *lusts of* that accursed spirit, whom I justly call *your father*, *you will* resolutely and obstinately persist to *do*;[k] and even now there is the plainest evidence of your resemblance to him, in your design to murder me, and in your opposition to the truth that I deliver to you; for *he* has always acted as the enemy of mankind, and *was a murderer from the beginning*, in his attempt to bring destruction on the world by sin: (compare 1 John iii. 8.) And to accomplish his destructive purpose, as his original integrity was lost by his apostacy from God, he threw off all regard to what was right, *and continued not in the truth*, but, by an audacious and most pernicious lie, ruined the first parents of the human race, *because there* was and *is no truth in him:* and, indeed, *when he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own*, and indulges the bias of his own fraudulent and perfidious nature; *for he is* himself *a liar, and* was *the father of it.*

44 Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

[h] Is it *because you cannot hear my word?*] I choose to place a mark of interrogation after this clause, Οτι ου δυνασθε ακουειν τον λογον τον εμον; and, δυνασθε ακουειν may refer either to their opportunity of *hearing*, which is the most common sense of the word, or to their capacity of *understanding:* I have therefore included both.—The word γινωσκειν, in the preceding clause, evidently signifies *to understand.* Acts viii. 30, and *to distinguish*, John x. 14.

[i] *You are of your father the devil*] The account Josephus gives of the wickedness of the Jews about this time, abundantly vindicates this assertion of our Lord from any appearance of undue severity. See Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 10 (al. vi. 11.) § 5; cap. 13 (al. 16,) § 6. Edit. Havercamp, and Dr. Lardner's Credibility, part i. book i. chap. 6. Vol. I. p. 304—310.

[k] *You will* resolutely and obstinately persist to *do.*] This is plainly the sense of the words, Θελετε ποιειν. See note a on John i. 43, Vol. I. p. 111.

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

or the first forger of that detestable and pernicious crime. And, as you are of such a disposition, if I would flatter your prejudices and vices, you would hear me with pleasure; *but because I* plainly and faithfully *speak the truth*, without desire of favour, or fear of offence, *you*, being under the influence of this false spirit, *do not believe me.* If you take upon you to deny this, and accuse me of falsehood and prevarication in any degree, how will you prove your charge? *Which of you convinceth me of* that, or any other *sin? But*, on the other hand, *if* it be evident that *I speak the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God*, or that is really a child of God, and a partaker of his Spirit, *hears* with an affectionate and obedient regard, *the words of God*, his heavenly Father, and receives them with reverence, by whomsoever they are brought: the reason *therefore*, why *you do not hear* mine, is *because*, as I have often said, *you are not* the children *of God.*

SECT. CIV. John VIII. 45.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

46

47 He that is of God, heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

47

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY we approve ourselves the sincere *disciples of Jesus*, by *continuing in his word*, and being *faithful* even *unto death*, as ever we expect *a crown of life!* (Rev. ii. 10.) Without this, external privileges will turn to but little account. The *children of Abraham* may be the *children of Satan;* and they are so, if they imitate the temper and works of the accursed *fiend*, rather than of the holy *patriarch. The devil was from the beginning a liar, and a murderer;* and all falsehood and malice are from him. Let us earnestly pray that we may be freed from them, and from the tyranny of every other sin to which we have been enslaved; that *Christ, the Son*, may *make us free* of his Father's family, and of his heavenly kingdom! Then we *shall be free indeed*, and no more be reduced to *bondage.*

Ver. 31 37, 38 44 36

May we prove that we are *the children of God*, by our readiness to *hear* and receive *the words* of our blessed *Redeemer*, the words of incarnate truth, and wisdom, and love; whom none of his enemies could ever *convict of sin*, nor ever accused him of it, but to their own confusion! May we resemble him in the innocence and holiness of his life; that we may the more easily and gracefully imitate that courage and zeal, with which he reproved the haughtiest sinners, and bore his testimony against the errors and vices of that degenerate age and nation in which he lived!

47 46

SECT. CV.

Jesus promising immortality to his followers, and speaking of his own existence as prior to that of Abraham, the Jews in the temple attempt to stone him; but he miraculously escapes from their hands. John VIII. 48, *to the end.*

JOHN VIII. 48.

SECT. CV. John VIII. 48.

NOW when *the Jews* heard Jesus so expressly declaring that they were ignorant of God, and were the children not of Abraham, but of the devil, they *answered* him *therefore*, with great rage and contempt, *and said unto him*, *Do we not well say, that thou*, who speakest of Israelites in such language as this, *art a Samaritan*, rather than one of the holy seed, *and art possessed by a demon*, who hurries thee on to such outrage and madness?[a]

JOHN VIII. 48. THEN answered the Jews, and said unto him, say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 But to this insolent charge *Jesus* meekly *answered*, It is plain, from the whole series of my discourses and actions, that *I am not a demoniac*, nor can any of you produce any thing in all that I have said or done which looks like lunacy or impiety; *but* the truth is, *I honour my Father*, by bearing a steady and consistent testimony to the doctrine he sent me to reveal to the world; *and*, because this is contrary to your corrupt prejudices and passions, therefore *you dishonour me* by such opprobrious reflections, in hope of discrediting my message. *But* as for what personally relates to me I am little affected with it; for *I seek not my own glory*; nevertheless, I know *there is one that seeketh*, and will secure it, *and* who now *judgeth* of all that passes, and will at length evidently shew the exact notice he has taken of it, to my honour and to your confusion. For God will not only finally glorify me, but will confer the highest honours and rewards on all my faithful servants; and therefore, *verily, verily, I say unto you, If any one keep my word, he shall never see death*,[b]

49 Jesus answered I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

[a] *Possessed by a demon*, who hurries thee on to such outrage and madness.] See note[d], on John vii. 20, sect. xcix.

[b] *He shall never see death.*] The turn given to this expression in the paraphrase, accounts not only for this passage and that in John xi. 26. (sect. cxl.) but for what is said of *Christ's having abolished death*, (2 Tim. i. 10;) having *destroyed the devil*, (Heb. ii. 14,) and *raised up Christians*

but shall assuredly be entitled to eternal life, and shall immediately be advanced to so glorious and happy a state, that the dissolution of this mortal nature shall, with respect to him, hardly deserve to be called death. SECT. CV. John VIII. 51

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets: and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

Then the Jews, thinking he had asserted that his disciples should be exempted from the common lot of mortality, *said* again *to him* in a reproachful way, *Now we* assuredly *know that thou hast a demon* dwelling in thee, which hurries thee on to this madness and pride, otherwise thou couldest never talk at this extravagant rate: for *Abraham*, the friend of God, and the great founder of our nation, *is dead: and* all *the* holy *prophets*, whom God raised up in succeeding ages, were so far from being able to bestow immortality on their followers, that even they themselves are long since dead; and *yet thou* presumptuously *sayest, If any one keep my word, he shall never taste of death.*[c] 52

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

What, *art thou greater than* that venerable patriarch *our father Abraham, who is dead, and* than all *the* most illustrious *prophets*, who *are* also *dead? Whom dost thou* then *pretend thyself to be*, that thou shouldest thus assume such a distinguishing glory to thyself? 53

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God:

Jesus replied, If I only *glorify myself*, by high encomiums on my own dignity and excellence, while I neglect the honour and service of my Father, *my glory is nothing* but a mere empty sound; [*but*] it evidently appears by all the series of my converse and miracles, compared with each other, that *it is my Father* himself *that* effectually *glorifies me*, even he, *of whom you* confidently *say, that he is your God*, though in this respect you pay so little regard 54

with himself, and made them sit with him in heavenly p'aces. (Eph. ii. 6.)—Death is as nothing, compared to what it would otherwise have been to the sinner; and the felicity of heaven is so sure and so near, that, by an easy and common figure, true Christians are spoken of as already there. See the following note.

[c] *Yet thou sayest, If any one keep my word, he shall never taste of death.*] This is not the phrase which our Lord used, ver. 51, though perhaps its signification is nearly equivalent. But I think it shews how improper it would be to interpret the preceding words Θανατον ου μη Θεωρηση εις τον αιωνα, *He shall not see death for ever*; as if they signified, He shall not die eternally: for on this interpretation of the words, there could have been no shadow of force in the argument they use, unless they had meant to assert that *Abraham and the prophets were dead*, εις τον αιωνα, *for ever*; than which nothing could be farther from the thoughts of any of the Jews, except the Sadducees, who do not seem to have been the persons speaking here. See note [1] on John iv. 14, Vol. I. p. 170.

SECT. CV. John VIII. 55

to his testimony. And notwithstanding all your boasts, *yet* nevertheless *you have not* truly *known him; but I* well *know him; and if I should* deny it, and *say that I know him not*, or retract my pretensions to that peculiar and intimate knowledge of him which I have so often professed, *I should be a liar like you: but I* repeat it again, notwithstanding all your enmity and your scorn, that I perfectly *know him, and* continually *keep his word* in its fullest extent and exactest purity. And I will tell you farther, that though you despise me, as unworthy of your notice, *your father Abraham* himself *was* even *transported with a* joyful *desire that he might see my day*,[d] or the time of my appearance and glory, *and* in some degree, *he saw* [*it*] by faith, *and rejoiced* in the distant and imperfect view,[e] thankfully receiving every intimation of the purposes of my coming which God was pleased to give him.

55 Yet ye have not known him, but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying,

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

57 *Then the Jews said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old,*[f] *and hast thou*, who but half a century ago was not in being, any room to

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

[d] *Was* even *transported with a* joyful *desire that he might see my day;* ηγαλλιασατο ινα ιδη την ημεραν την εμην,] It is necessary to translate the word ηγαλλιασατο thus, not only to avoid the tautology which our translation occasions, but also to preserve the force of the words ινα ιδη. And indeed the expression may with the strictest propriety signify *leaping forward with joy* to meet the object of our wishes, as well as *exulting* in the possession of it. See Blackw. Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 46—48.

[e] *He saw it* by faith, *and rejoiced* in the view.] I cannot think with Mr. Fleming, (Christology, Vol. I. p. 221.) that the appearance of Christ to Abraham, (Gen xviii. 1.) could with any propriety be here referred to as Christ's day. It seems much more reasonable to conclude with Dr. Scott and Mr. Henry, that it intimates some peculiar discoveries which the Spirit of God might make to Abraham for his own private consolation, though not expressly recorded in scripture. And thus, with regard to him, as well as many other saints under that dispensation, the secret of the Lord might in an extraordinary manner be with them, and he might shew them much more of his covenant than they could have discovered without such extraordinary assistance.—Compare Psalm xxv. 14, and see Dr. Scott's Christian Life, Vol. V. p. 194.—Since I drew up this note, the reverend and learned Dr. Warburton has shewn, that there is great reason to believe, our Lord here particularly refers to a special revelation made to Abraham, when he received that command from God to offer up Isaac; by which he was informed, that the sacrifice then enjoined him was a symbol of the method, which God would really take for the redemption of sinful men, by the death and resurrection of his own Son. See Divine Legation, Vol. II. p. 589—627, and the Vindication of it, in the second volume of Occasional Remarks

[f] *Thou art not yet fifty years old.*] Christ was not now *five and thirty;* but Erasmus thinks that, worn with labours, he might appear older than he was. Lightfoot imagines, that as the Levites were discharged from the temple service at fifty, (compare Numb. iv. 3, 23.) that age was proverbially used; as I think it might have been, without any such institution relating to them. It is little to the credit of Irenæus's judgment to have inferred from hence, or admitted on an uncertain tradition, fathered on St. Luke, that Christ was now turned of forty. See Iren. lib. ii. cap. 39. 40.

pretend that thou hast *seen* and conversed with *Abraham*, who has been dead more than two thousand years? SECT. CV.

John VIII. 58.

58 Jesus said unto them Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, and solemnly affirm it as a most certain truth, how incredible soever it may seem, that *before Abraham was born*,[g] I had a glorious existence with the Father, and *I am* still invariably the same, and one with him.[h]

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

This appeared to them so direct a claim to the name and properties of the external JEHOVAH, that, being ignorant of the divine nature of Christ, they thought it intolerable blasphemy; and though he was *then* discoursing in so sacred a place as the temple, *they* immediately *took up* some loose *stones*, with which they were repairing either the pavement or the building,[i] *that they might cast them at him*, to destroy him: *but Jesus* in a miraculous manner *concealed himself* from their sight, *and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them* unknown,[k] *and so passed on* to another place till their fury was a little appeased. 59

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH what *patience* did our blessed *Redeemer* bear, and with what *meekness of wisdom* did he answer, the most virulent and opprobrious language? When he was rudely charged with being *a Samaritan*, and *having a demon*, he *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself;* (Heb. xii. 3;) and *being* thus *reviled, he reviled not again.* (1 Pet. ii. 23.) And shall we too keenly resent the *reflections* which are thrown upon us! May but our conscience witness for us, and we need not fear all that are against us! Verse 48, 49

[g] *Before Abraham was born.*] Erasmus observes, that this is the meaning of γινεσθαι; and Raphelius abundantly justifies the interpretation. Annot. ex Xen. p. 133.

[h] *I am* invariably the same, &c.] Compare Heb. xiii. 8. I have long (with Chrysostom and many others,) looked on this text as at least a strong intimation of the Deity of Christ, nearly parallel to Heb. i. 12, συ δε ο αυτος ει, *thou art the same.*—I cannot apprehend that εγω ειμι is ever used for *I was;* nor imagine that if our Lord had been a mere creature, he would have ventured to express himself in a manner so nearly bordering on blasphemy, or have permitted his beloved disciple so dangerously to disguise his meaning.

[i] *Took up* some loose *stones*, with which they were repairing, &c.] See Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. on this place; and note [h] on John ii. 20, Vol. I. p. 144.

[k] *Going through the midst of them.*] The omission of these words in this passage, as quoted by Chrysostom and Augustin, as well as in some manuscripts, has led some to suspect they were added from Luke iv. 30. See Vol. I. sect. xxxii. note [p], p. 188.

SECT. CV. Verse 49, 50

Christ honoured his Father, and *sought not his own glory.* So may we be careful of the honour of God, and cheerfully commit to him the guardianship and care of our reputation! And we shall find *there is one that seeketh, and judgeth* in our favour.

51 It is a great and important promise which our Lord here makes, *If any one keep my word, he shall never see death.* Sense seems to plead against it; but he is *the resurrection and* 52 *the life*, and hath assured us he will make it good. Let us therefore be *strong in faith, giving glory to God;* (Rom. iv. 20.) Though not only *Abraham* and *the Prophets*, but *Peter* and *Paul*, and the other *apostles are dead*, yet this word shall be gloriously accomplished. Still *they live* to him, and shortly shall they be for ever recovered from the power of the grave; so that *death* is to them comparatively as nothing. With them may our final portion be, and we may set light by the reproaches, clamours, and accusations of prejudiced, ignorant, and sinful men!

Adored be that gracious Providence that determined our existence to begin in *t at* happy *day*, which *prophets* and *patri-* 56 *archs desired to see*, and in the distant view of which *Abraham rejoiced!* Let it be also *our joy;* for *Jesus Christ* is *the same* 58 *yesterday, to-day, and for ever;* nor could *the heart* of those holy men fully *conceive those things which God had prepared for them that love him*, and which *he has* now *revealed unto us by his spirit.* (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.)

SECT. CVI.

The seventy disciples return with joy: Christ foretells the greater success of his gospel, and praises his heavenly Father for the wise, though mysterious dispensation of it. Luke X. 17—24.

LUKE X. 17.

SECT. CVI. Luke. X. 17.

AFTER these things, Jesus determined to take his last, and, as it seems, his most successful, circuit through Galilee;[a] *and*, before he set out upon it, *the seventy* disciples, who had been sent before him as his harbingers, (sect. xcvii. p. 37;) *returned* to him *again*[b] *with*

LUKE X. 17.

AND the seventy returned again with joy, saying,

[a] His last circuit through Galilee.] St. Luke has given us a large account of several occurrences in it, omitted by all the other evangelists; and I think there can be no doubt but it must come in here. It was dispatched between the feast of tabernacles and the dedication (mentioned John x. 22, sect. cxxxiv.) or between the months of September and December.—I call it his last circuit through Galilee, because it is strongly intimated, that after the conclusion of it he returned thither no more before his crucifixion. (See Luke xiii. 31—33, and John x. 40—42.) Quickly after his resurrection, which was the next spring, we find five hundred brethren in Galilee. (1 Cor. xv. 6.) It is probable most of them might be converted in this journey; for we never find him attended by greater multitudes, nor his enemies more alarmed, than about this time.

[b] *The seventy* disciples *returned* to him *again.*] I presume not to determine where

Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

great *joy*, attended with some mixture of surprise, *saying, Lord*, we have not only cured diseases, according to the power thou wast pleased to give us, (ver 9, p. 39;) but, though thy commission did not directly express so much, yet it appears that *even the demons* themselves *are subject to us*, when *in thy name* we command them to go out of such as they had possessed. SECT. CVI. Luke X. 17.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

And he said to them, I know that it is and must be so: for *I* myself *saw Satan*, the great prince of the demons, *falling like lightning from heaven* on his first transgression, and well remember how immediate and dreadful his ruin was;[c] and I foresee in spirit that renewed, swift, and irresistible victory, of which this present success of yours is an earnest, which the preaching of the gospel shall shortly gain over all these rebel powers, which even in their highest strength and glory were so incapable of opposing the arm of God. And, that you may more successfully pursue this conquest, *behold I* now *give you* a miraculous *power*, securely *to tread upon serpents and scorpions*, those venomous and hurtful creatures, (compare Mark xvi. 18, and Acts xxviii. 5;) in token of your triumph over the infernal spirits, *and over all the might of* Satan *the* great *enemy*, which he may set in array against you; *and* I will so effectually support you in all the trials you shall meet with, that *nothing shall by any means* be able to *injure you*, while you continue faithful in your adherence to my service. (Compare Psal. xci. 13. and Gen. iii. 15.) *Nevertheless, rejoice not* so much *in this, that the* evil *spirits are* thus *subject to you*, and that you are enabled miraculously to controul them; *but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven*, and that you stand enrolled among the heirs of that glorious world, as the peculiar objects of the divine favour and love. 18

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 19

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. 20

or when they met him; but considering they were by the law obliged to attend this feast at Jerusalem, it seems most probable that was the time and place.

[c] *I saw Satan*, &c.] I think this answer to the seventy loses much of its beauty and propriety, unless we suppose Satan to have been the prince of the demons they spoke of, and also allow the reference hinted at in the paraphrase, to the first fall of that rebellious spirit. Compare 2 Pet. ii. 4, and Jude, ver. 6. —For the remainder of this section and some of the following, the reader may consult the notes in the parallel passages referred to, which have been considered in their proper places above.

SECT. CVI. Luke X. 21.

In that remarkable *hour*, *Jesus*, in a pleasing contemplation of the success, that should attend his gospel, though it was to be propagated by such weak instruments, exceedingly *rejoiced in* his *spirit*, *and said* in the words he had used on a former occasion,[d] (Mat. xi. 25, 26, Vol. I. p. 326;) *I ascribe glory to thee*, *O* Almighty *Father*, the Creator and *Lord* both *of heaven and earth*, *that* while *thou hast hid these things from the wise* philosophers *and prudent* politicians of the age, thou hast discovered them in the mean time to others of an inferior character, *and hast* graciously *revealed them to* the weak, the ignorant, and the poor, who are but as *infants* in the eyes of the world, and in their own apprehension: *be it so*, *O Father!* I cheerfully acquiesce in it, *since such is thy* sovereign, wise, and holy *pleasure*, to humble human pride, and to display the glory of thy name.

21 In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 Then likewise did Jesus repeat the declaration of his own extensive authority and said (as before, Vol. I. p. 326;) *All things* in the kingdom of Providence and grace *are delivered to me by my Father; and no one* perfectly *knows who the Son is, except the Father; nor who the Father is, except the Son, and he to whom the Son will* be pleased to *reveal* [*him:*] so that from me you must learn the saving knowledge of God, and the way to secure his favour.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

23 *And* then, *turning to his disciples*, *he said* [*to them*] *apart*, *Blessed are the eyes which* do, or hereafter shall, *see the things that you see:* and (I may add) the ears which do, or hereafter shall, hear the things that you daily and familiarly hear. 24 In the midst of all your poverty, fatigue, and danger, you have reason to think yourselves exceeding happy; *for I say unto you*, and very solemnly assure you of it, *That many* of the most eminent *prophets* of the Old Testament dispensation, *and* even of the most pious and illustrious *kings* whom God raised up to reign over his people, *desired* earnestly

23 And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see:

24 For I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those

[d] *And said* in the words he had used on a former occasion.] They are here repeated with evident propriety, in the view of that glorious success which should attend these his despised servants, as the destined conquerors of the infernal legions, by whom thousands of the poor should be brought to receive the gospel.

things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

to have seen the things which you see, and did not see them; and to have heard the things which you hear, and did not hear them: remember then how much you are indebted to the divine goodness, and let it be your care to make a suitable improvement of them. (Compare Mat. xiii. 16, 17, Vol. I p. 360.)

SECT. CVI. Luke X. 24

IMPROVEMENT.

AND are not *our obligations* in some measure proportionable to *theirs*, while these glorious sights are reflected to *our eyes* from the mirror of his word, and these glad tidings are echoed back *to our ears!* Have not *we* also reason to adore the peculiar favour of God to us, and to admire the *sovereignty* of his love, that he has been pleased to *reveal his Son* in us, and has given to such *babes*, as we must own ourselves to be, that spiritual knowledge of him, which he has suffered to remain *hidden* from the great, the learned, and the wise; *Even so, Father*, must we also say, *for so it seemed good in thy sight:* thou *hast mercy on whom thou wilt have mercy*, and often exaltest the riches of thy grace, by the meanness and unworthiness of those on whom it is bestowed. Verse 23, 24. 21

Have we reason to hope, that our worthless *names* are *written in heaven?* let us often think of that glorious society amongst whom we are enrolled as members, and *rejoice* in the thought of those privileges, which result from such a relation to it: *privileges*, in comparison of which, a power to *heal diseases*, and *eject demons* with a word, would hardly deserve our *joy* In a grateful sense of them, let us adore the grace which gave us a place in the *Lamb's book of life*, and be ever solicitous to behave in a manner worthy of so illustrious a hope. 20

We have great encouragement to expect that he, before whom *Satan fell like lightning from heaven*, will enable us finally to *trample on his power*. Let us not servilely fear that condemned criminal, already marked with the scars of the divine vengeance; but let us cheerfully hope, that the triumph over him will be renewed by the preaching of the gospel. Quickened by that hope, let us more earnestly pray, that the ruin of his gloomy kingdom may be daily more and more apparent, especially among us; that our gracious Redeemer, who reckons the interest of souls his own, may have renewed reason of *joy* and *praise* on that account. Exert, O blessed Jesus, thine own almighty arm for that great purpose; and, as *thou alone* canst do it, *reveal thine heavenly Father* to those who, by neglecting *thee*, shew that they *know not him!* 18, 19. 21. 22

SECT. CVII

Christ answers the scribe who asked what he should do to inherit eternal life; and illustrates his answer by the parable of the good Samaritan. Luke X. 25—37.

LUKE X. 25.

SECT. CVII. Luke X. 25

WHILE our Lord was discoursing in this manner with his seventy disciples, an assembly of people gathered round them; *and behold,* among the rest, *a certain* man who was a *lawyer,* or one of those scribes who made it their profession to study and teach the law of Moses, and to resolve many curious questions relating to it, *rose up* with a design *to try him*;[a] *and,* to judge of the skill of Jesus in divine matters *said,* O thou great *Master* and Teacher in Israel, *what must I do that I may inherit* that *eternal life* which thou so frequently proposest as the main object of our pursuits, and which is indeed most worthy of them?

LUKE X. 25.

AND behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 *And* Jesus, as *he* knew with what design he had proposed the question, wisely returned it on himself, and *said to him, What is written in the law,* which thy profession must engage thee to have made thy study? *how dost thou* find the case to be determined there? and what is it thou dost so frequently *read* there?[b]

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 *And he replying, said,* It is there written as the sum of all the commandments, (Deut. vi. 5. Lev. xix. 18;) "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy* "*God with all thine heart, and with all thy* "*soul, and with all thy strength, and with all* "*thine understanding;* thou shalt unite all the "faculties of thy soul to render him the most "intelligent and sincere, the most affectionate "and resolute service;[c] *and* thou shalt also

27 And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

[a] With a design *to try him.*] Dr. Barrow concludes, it was with an intent to ensnare him; the question being so determined by the Jewish doctors, that for a different answer he might have been accused of heresy; (see Barrow's Works, Vol. I. p. 221:) but I see no certain proof of so bad an intention.

[b] *How dost thou* so frequently *read* there?] Vitringa with great pertinency observes, that what the scribe replies, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,* &c. was daily read in their synagogues, which made the answer more apparently proper. (Vitring. Synag. p. 1060.) And that this passage of scripture is still read by the whole assembly, both in their morning and evening prayers, and is called, from the first word of it, the Shemah, may be seen in Pedahzur's Ceremonies of the modern Jews, p. 49 and 115; only it is observable, they leave out that clause, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* See Wotton's Miscell. Vol. I. p. 171—194.

[c] Thou shalt unite all the faculties of thy soul, &c.] I apprehend, with Archbishop Tillotson, we may acquiese in

SECT. CVII.

"love *thy neighbour* as sincerely and impar-
"tially *as* thou lovest *thyself*."

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

Jesus readily approved his answer; but was desirous to convince him at the same time how far he was from coming up to what the law required: *and*, in this view, *he said to him, Thou hast answered right: do this, and thou shalt live:* do it perfectly, and thou wilt have a legal claim to life; or cultivate this temper sincerely, and God will not leave thee finally to perish, but will give thee all necessary discoveries of his will in order to thine eternal salvation. Luke X. 28.

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

But he, willing to justify himself as to the integrity of his inquiry, and to display the virtue of his character, not at all doubting but he sufficiently understood his duty to God, *said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour*, whom by this latter precept I am obliged to love? for I would fain know the whole of my duty, that I may practise it in all its extent. 29

30 And Jesus answering, said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

And Jesus replying, spake the following parable, which was intended to shew, in the most lively manner, that every human creature, who needs our assistance, is to be considered by us as our neighbour, of whatever nation, or faith, or profession he may be: and he *said, A certain man* of our own country *went down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and*, passing through those wild deserts and dangerous roads,[d] he *fell among* some of those cruel *robbers who* so often assault such as travel that way: and these ruffians, *having both* plundered, *stripped*, and bound him, *and* having also *wounded him* in a cruel and dangerous manner,[e] *went off, leaving him half dead.* 30

31 And by chance

And it happened, that while he 31

this general sense of the passage, without being solicitous to seek a particular distinct idea to each of the words used here. Otherwise I should think καρδια, *the heart*, a general expression, illustrated by the three following words; *even with all thy soul*, (ψυχης,) that is, with the warmest affection; *and with all thy strength*, (ισχυος,) that is, with the most vigorous resolution of the will; *and with all thine understanding*, (διανοιας,) that is, taking care to form rational ideas of him, as a guide to the affections and resolutions. Accordingly we may observe, that in a parallel place (Mark xii. 33,) the word συνεσις is used instead of διανοια. And this very word is justly translated *Understanding*, Eph. i. 18; iv. 18; and 1 John v. 20.

[d] Passing through those wild deserts and dangerous roads.] This circumstance is well chosen; for so many robberies and murders were committed on this road, which lay through a kind of wilderness, that Jerom tells us it was called מורדמים, the *bloody way*.—Jericho is said to have been seated in a valley, and thence is the phrase of going down to it.

[e] *Wounded him* in a cruel and dangerous manner.] This is strongly implied

SECT. CVII.

Luke X. 31.

was in these deplorable circumstances, *a certain priest went down that way*, who was going to Jericho, where so many of that profession were settled;[f] *and* though by virtue of his sacred office he ought to have been a peculiar example of humanity to the afflicted, yet *seeing him* lie at some little distance, and being willing to avoid the trouble or expence which a more particular inquiry might have occasioned, *he crossed [the road,] and went on*, proceeding in his
32 journey without any farther notice. *And in like manner* too, *a Levite* going that way, *when he was at the place*, just *came and looked on* this miserable object,[g] *and* immediately *crossed and passed by*, without doing any thing at all for his
33 relief. And thus the distressed creature might have lain and perished, *but* for *a certain Samaritan*,[h] who, *as he was travelling* the same way, *came* to the place *where he was, and seeing him* in this sad condition, though he might easily know, or at least guess him to be a Jew, yet, notwithstanding the general hatred of these two nations to each other,[i] he *was moved with* very tender *compassion* to-
34 wards him: *And going to him, he bound up his wounds* in the best manner he could,[k]

there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on *him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring

in the expression πληγας επιθεις; *having laid on wounds.*

f Where so many of that profession were settled.] See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. in loc. where he produces a passage from a considerable Jewish writer, to prove that twelve thousand priests and Levites dwelt at Jericho; which, if it had any shadow and degree of truth, vindicates the paraphrase, and shews how naturally the priest and Levite were here introduced, without any reflection on their office.

g *Came and looked on* this miserable object.] This is the import of ελθων και ιδων, as Raphelius has shewn in his Notes from Xenophon p. 91.

h *A certain Samaritan.*] It is admirably well judged, to represent the distress on the side of the Jew, and the mercy on that of the Samaritan; for self-interest would make them see how amiable such a conduct was, and lay them open to our Lord's inference, ver. 37. Had it been put the other way, prejudices might more easily have interposed, before the heart could have been struck with these tender circumstances.

i Notwithstanding the hatred of these two nations to each other.] See note s on John iv. 9. Vol. I. sect. xxix. p. 160, —Some writers tell us, this hatred arose so high, that if a Jew and a Samaritan met in a narrow way, they were exceedingly solicitous that they might pass without touching each other, for fear of pollution on each side. If this was fact, it is a beautiful illustration of the humanity of this good Samaritan, who would not only touch this Jew, but took so much pains to dress his wounds and to set him on his own beast, supporting him in his arms as he rode, as well as making such generous provision for him at the inn.

k *Bound up his wounds*, &c.] As the Jew was stripped by the robbers, ver. 30. we may probably suppose the Samaritan used some of his own garments for this purpose; which was a farther instance of wonderful goodness, perhaps tearing them to make a more convenient bandage.

in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

SECT. CVII.

Luke X. 34.

when, as the only means he had to cure them, *he had poured in* some of the *oil and wine* which he had taken with him as part of the provisions for his journey; (compare Gen. xxviii. 18;) *and setting him on his own beast*, because he was incapable of walking, *he* held him up as he rode, and with the tenderest care *brought him* safely *to an inn*, where he had some acquaintance; *and* there *took* farther *care of him*, that he should be lodged and accommodated in a proper manner that night.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

And the next morning, as he departed from the inn, *he took out* of his purse *two* denarii, or Roman *pence*,[1] *and gave them to the landlord* of the house; *and* at the same time *said to him*, *Take* all possible *care of* this poor wounded stranger, and let *him* want for nothing; *and whatsoever more thou shalt spend* on his account, *I will repay thee as I come back.*

35

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, he that shewed mercy on him. Then Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Now, said our Lord to the lawyer he was discoursing with, *which of these three* persons, the priest, the Levite, or the compassionate Samaritan, *dost thou think was the neighbour of this* poor *man that fell among the robbers? And he said*, Undoubtedly it was *he that had mercy upon him*, notwithstanding he was a person of another nation and religion. *Then said Jesus to him*, If this seem so amiable an example to thee, *Go, and do thou likewise*; and if thou findest even a Samaritan in the like distress, consider him as thy neighbour, and as cheerfully perform all these beneficent and friendly offices to him: for those pretensions to religion are but vain, which do not inspire men with such universal humanity and benevolence.

36

37

IMPROVEMENT.

Of how great importance is it, that we should every one of us be in good earnest making this inquiry which the scribe ad- Ver. 25

—Of the use the ancients made of wine and oil, in dressing fresh wounds, see Bos, Exerc. p. 24, and Wolfius on this text.

[1] *Two* denarii, or Roman *pence*.] These were in value about fifteen pence of our money. It is a very probable circumstance, that a man travelling without any attendants, and now going out to a considerable distance from home, should not have more to spare, especially as he was to travel through so dangerous a road; and so it would have been very imprudent to charge himself with much more money than he was like to want in his journey, which would be the less as it was usual for travellers in those parts to carry their provision with them. Compare Gen. xxviii. 18, and Josh. ix. 12, 13.

SECT. CVII. dressed to our Lord, *What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?* What ought we not willingly to do, and to bear, that we may secure so great a felicity? Still will our Lord answer us Ver. 26 from his word, that we must *keep the commandments of God*, while we are looking to *him* as *the end of the law for righteousness*; (Rom. x. 4.) Happy are they that faithfully *do it*, that through the grace manifested in the gospel *they may have a right to eat of the tree of life!* (Rev. xxii. 14.)

May this abstract and summary of the commandments be *written*, as it were in golden characters, *on the table* of each of *our* 27 *hearts!* May we *love the Lord our God with all* the united powers and faculties of *our souls*, and *our neighbour as* sincerely and fervently as *ourselves!* And may we learn, from this beautiful *parable* of the *good Samaritan*, to exercise our charity to our fellow-creatures in the most amiable manner!

31, 32 The *Jewish priest* and *Levite* had, no doubt, the ingenuity to find out some excuse or other for *passing over to the other side*; and might, perhaps, formally thank God for their own deliverance, while they left *their brother* to bleed to death for want of their assistance. Is it not an emblem of many living characters, perhaps of some, whose *sacred office* lays them under the strongest obligations to distinguished benevolence and generosi-
33 ty? But the *good Samaritan* acted the part of *a brother* to this expiring *Jew*. *O seed of Israel, O house of Levi* and of *Aaron!* will not the day come, when the humane virtues of *heathens* shall *rise up in judgment* against thee!

34, 35 Let us reflect with shame, what are the *differences* between one *Christian* and another, when compared with those between a *Samaritan* and a *Jew!* Yet here the *benevolence* of a good heart overcame even these; and, on the view of a wounded dying man, forgot that he was by nation *an enemy*. Whose *heart* does not *burn within him*, whose *eyes* do not overflow with *tears of delight*, while he reads such a story? Let us *go and do like-*
37 *wise*, regarding every man as *our neighbour*, who needs our assistance. Let us exclude every malignant sentiment of *bigotry* and *party zeal*, which would contract our hearts into an insensibility for all the human race, but a little select number, whose sentiments and practices are so much our own, that our love to them is but *self-love* reflected. With an honest openness of mind let us always remember the *relation* between man and man, and feel and cultivate that happy *instinct*, by which God, who has *formed our hearts* in many instances *alike*, has in the original constitution of our nature strongly and graciously bound them to each other.

SECT. CVIII.

Christ visits his friends at Bethany, and commends the diligence with which Mary attends his preaching, while her sister Martha was too anxious about the entertainment of her guests. Luke X. 38, *to the end.*

LUKE X. 38.

SECT. CVIII. Luke X. 38.

LUKE X. 38. NOW it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman, named Martha, received him into her house.

ABOUT this time[a] our Lord quitted Jerusalem, and set out with his disciples on his last journey from thence to Galilee, the feast of tabernacles (as was observed above) being fully concluded. *Now it came to pass, as they were on their journey, he entered,* with many of his attendants, *into a certain* neighbouring *village* called Bethany; (compare John xi. 1, sect. cxxxix;) *and a certain* pious *woman, whose name was Martha,* with the most cheerful hospitality *received him into her house,* thinking herself greatly honoured by such a visit.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

39 *And she had a sister called Mary, who,* being earnestly desirous to improve this happy opportunity of advancing in divine knowledge and a religious temper, *sat down at the feet of Jesus,* as an humble disciple;[b] *and heard* with most diligent and pleasing attention *his* wise and gracious *discourse,* which, as his usual practice was, he began as soon as he came in, to address to those that were about him.

40 But Martha was cumbered about

40 *But Martha,* too solicitous about the variety and elegance of the entertainment she intended for her sacred Guest and the company with him, *was* exceedingly *hurried*[c] and perplexed

[a] *About this time.*] I express myself in this undeterminate manner as to the date of this little, but very instructive story, because I apprehend the evangelist has not exactly determined when it happened, which it was of no importance for us exactly to know. It might very possibly be just at this time; at least the want of any sufficient reason for transposing it, obliges me, on the rules I have laid down to myself, to introduce it here.

[b] *Sat down at the feet of Jesus,* as an humble disciple.] It is well known that this was the posture in which learners attended on their teachers, (compare Luke viii. 35, and Acts xxii. 3;) and likewise grew into a proverb for humble and diligent attention. See the authors cited by Wolfius in loc. and especially Vitringa, Synag. lib. i. part 2, cap. 6.

[c] *Was* exceedingly *hurried.*] The word περιεσπατο properly signifies *to be drawn* (as it were) *different ways* at the same time, and admirably expresses the situation of a mind surrounded with so many objects of care, that it hardly knows which to attend to first. She had probably servants to whom she might have committed these affairs; and the humility and moderation of our blessed

SECT. CVIII. Luke X. 40.

about much serving; and coming in to the room where Jesus was, *she*, not without some warmth and discontent, expressed how much she was offended at her sister's sitting still, and *said*, *Lord, dost thou not mind that my sister has left me to* provide and *serve* up the entertainment *alone*, which is more than I can well manage; while she sits here as calmly as if she had no concern in it? I would not take upon me to call her away from thy presence myself; but I beg that thou wouldest interpose in the matter; *speak to her therefore, that she may lend her helping hand with mine*,[d] and let her then sit down to hear thee discourse when the entertainment is over.

much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 *And Jesus in reply said to her*, O *Martha, Martha, thou art* over *anxious and disturbed* with restless agitation of spirit[e] *about many things* which are not worth so much solicitude, and might well have been spared on such an occasion as this: *But* let me tell thee, my dear friend, that *there is one thing* absolutely *necessary*,[f] and of infinitely greater importance than any of these domestic and secular cares; even the care to have the soul instructed in the saving knowledge of the way that leads to eternal life, and to secure a title to it: *and Mary* is wisely attending to that; therefore, instead of reproving her, I must rather declare that she *has chosen* what may eminently be called *the good part*,[g] *which* as it *shall not be* finally

41 And Jesus answered, and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful. And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall

Redeemer would have taken up with what had been less exactly prepared; especially as she had so valuable and so signal an opportunity of improving her mind in divine knowledge.

[d] *Lend her helping hand with mine.*] This is the exact import of συναντιλαβηται, which is also with the utmost propriety used for the *assistance* which the *Spirit of God* gives to the infirmities of our frail nature. Rom. viii. 26.

[e] *Disturbed* with restless agitation of spirit.] The word τυρβαζη is no where else used in the New Testament. It seems to express the restless situation of a person in a tumultuous crowd, where so many are pressing upon him that he can hardly stand his ground; or of water in great agitation.

[f] *There is one thing* absolutely *necessary*: πλην δε εστι χρεια.] This is one of the gravest and most important apophthegms that ever was uttered: and one can scarce pardon the frigid impertinence of Theophylact and Basil, who explain it as if he only meant, *One dish of meat is enough.*

[g] *The good part.*] That μερις signifies a *portion*, there can be no reasonable doubt; but that here is any allusion to the custom of sending *the best portion* of an entertainment to a guest to whom peculiar honour was intended, seems too great a refinement, and not exactly suitable to the occasion; though some considerable critics have defended it. (See Wolfius, in loc. and Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 225, 226.) I think, rendering την αγαθην μεριδα, *the good part*, is more forcible, as well as more literal, than our translation; as it intimates nothing else to deserve the name of *a good part* when compared with this. Compare Mat. xix. 17, sect. cxxxvii.

not be taken away from her.

taken away from her, I would not now hinder her from pursuing; but rather invite thee to join with her in her attention to it, though the circumstances of our intended meal should not be so exactly adjusted as thy fond friendship could desire.

SECT. CVIII. Luke X. 24.

IMPROVEMENT.

So steadily and zealously did our blessed Lord pursue his work, with such unwearied diligence and constant affection! No sooner is he *entered into the house* of this pious friend, but he sets himself to preach the word of salvation, and is the same in the *parlour* which he had been in the *temple*. O *Mary*, how delightful was thy situation! Who would not rather have *sat* with thee *at the feet of Jesus*, to *hear his wisdom*, than have filled *the throne* of the greatest prince upon earth! *Blessed* were *thine eyes* in what they saw, *thine ears* in what they heard, and *thine heart* in what it received and embraced, and treasured up as *food* which would *endure to everlasting life!* Verse 38, 39

How unhappily was her good *sister* deprived of the entertainment of these golden moments, while *hurried* about meats and drinks, and tables with their furniture, till she lost, not only her *opportunity*, but her *temper* too; as it is indeed hard to preserve it, without a resolute guard, amidst the crowd and clamour of domestic cares! Happy that *mistress* of a numerous family, who can manage its concerns with the meekness and composure of *wisdom*, and adjust its affairs in such a manner, as that it may not exclude the pleasures of *devotion*, and cut her off from the means of religious improvement! Happy the *man* who, in a pressing variety of secular business, is not so *cumbered* and *careful*, as to forget that *one thing* which is absolutely *needful*; but resolutely chooses *this better part*, and retains it as the only secure and everlasting treasure! Oh that this comprehensive and important sentence were ever before our eyes! Oh that it were inscribed deep upon our hearts! *One thing is needful.* And what is this *one thing*, but the care of the soul? what, but an humble attention to the voice and the gospel of *Christ?* Yet, as if *this* were of all things the most unnecessary, for what poor trifling *care* is it not commonly forgot? yea, to what worthless *vanity* is it not daily sacrificed? 40, 41, 42

Let the *ministers of Christ*, let the friends of souls in every station, exert themselves, that all about them may be awakened duly to regard this great interest; accounting it *their meat* and *their drink* to promote it. Let them be always solicitous, that neither they nor others may neglect it for the hurries of too

SECT. CVIII. busy a life, or even for the services of an over-officious friendship.

SECT. CIX.

Christ being entreated by his disciples to teach them to pray, repeats, with some additions, the instructions and encouragements relating to that duty which he had formerly given in his sermon on the mount. Luke XI. 1—13.

LUKE XI. 1.

SECT. CIX. Luke XI. 1

OUR Lord then leaving Bethany, went on his way; dividing his time, as usual, between the care of teaching his numerous followers and the exercises of secret devotion. *And as he was* one day *praying in a certain* retired *place, when he had ended, one of his disciples said to him, Lord,* we desire thou wouldest *teach us to pray,* and give us some short form which may be proper for our frequent use, *as John also taught his disciples,*[a] and other leading men of the several religious sects among us have taught theirs.

LUKE XI. 1.

AND it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 *And he said to them, When ye pray,* you may use that form which I before have given as a comprehensive model and directory for prayer, (see Mat. vi. 9—13, Vol. I. p. 231, & *seq*;) and *say* in your addresses to God, "O God of "the spirits of all flesh,[b] who dwellest in the "high and holy place, with humble reverence "we bow before thee, and with a filial confi- "dence in thy mercy, and mutual love unto "each other, we would look up to thee as to *our* "God and *Father, who* with the most amazing "grace and condescension *art* ready to attend "unto the supplications of thy children from thy

2 And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father

[a] *As John also taught his disciples.*] Many learned men suppose, that the Jewish masters used to give their followers some short form of prayer, as a peculiar badge of their relation to them. This John the Baptist had probably done, though we know not now what it was. And in this view only, can we suppose the disciples could now ask Jesus to *teach them to pray*; for it is not to be thought, that in the three preceding years of his ministry, he had not often given them instructions both as to the *matter* and *manner* of *prayer*. In this sense, Mr. Joseph Mede, and Dr. Lightfoot understand the request and answer before us; and I have never met with any thing upon it which has given me more satisfaction. See Mede's Works, p. 1, 2, and Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in loc.

[b] *O God, &c.*] I think it but justice to the reverend Mr. Godwin to let the reader know, that this paraphrase on the 2d, 3d, and 4th verses was written by him. I had here only given a translation, having paraphrased this excellent prayer before in Vol. I. sect. xi. the notes on which may be consulted here.

SECT. CIX. Luke XI. 2.

which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come: thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth;

" throne *in heaven*: we adore thee as possessed
" of infinite perfections; and as our first con-
" cern is for thy glory, we offer it as our first
" request, *May thy name be* every where *sanc-*
" *tified;* may thy perfections be displayed
" through all the world, and be regarded with
" the highest veneration! And, that the ho-
" nour of thy Majesty may be thus exalted,
" *May thy kingdom come* which thou hast pro-
" mised to establish under the Messiah; may
" thy victorious grace be universally triumph-
" ant over all thine enemies, and thy people
" be willing in the day of thy power! And, as
" an evidence of its efficacy on the hearts of
" men, *May thy* holy *will be done, as* it is con-
" stantly *in heaven, so likewise upon earth;* and
" be as cheerfully submitted to, as fully ac-
" quiesced in, and readily obeyed in all things,
" as it is possible for us in this imperfect state,
" to imitate those heavenly spirits who delight
" in doing thy commandments, and hearkening

3 Give us day by day our daily bread:

" to the voice of thy word! During our con- 3
" tinuance here on earth we would not be so-
" licitous to seek great things for ourselves,
" but humbly beg that thou wouldest *give us*
" *day by day our daily bread,* and wouldest
" supply us, as our wants return upon us, with
" such a competent provision of the necessaries
" of life as may enable us to serve thee ac-
" ceptably, and to attend without distraction
" and uneasiness to the performance of our

4 And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

" duty. *And,* though the guilt of our ini- 4
" quities might justly separate between thee
" and us, and withhold good things from us,
" we earnestly entreat thee to extend thy mer-
" cy to us, and to *forgive us* all *our sins; for*
" *even we,* the bowels of whose mercy cannot
" be compared with thine, are willing to *for-*
" *give every one that is indebted to us,* and
" desire to pardon all that have injured us:
" *and,* to prevent us for the time to come from
" falling into sin, *bring us not into* circum-
" stances that will expose us to the danger of
" *temptation,* nor suffer us to be tempted above
" what we are able to bear; *but* keep us by
" thy grace from all iniquity, and *rescue us*
" *from* the power of *the evil one,* that he may
" never triumph in our fall, and we may final-

SECT. CIX

"ly be saved from all the ruinous effects of "sin."

Luke XI. 5.

And when he thus had taught them what they were to pray for, in order to excite and encourage them to a believing importunity in prayer, *he said to them, Who* is there *of you* that has not observed the efficacy of importunate requests?[c] If, for instance, he *shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight*, and knock at his door, *and say to him, Friend,* I desire thou wouldest *lend me three loaves;* 6 *For a friend of mine*, who was benighted *on his journey*, is just *come to my house, and* being altogether unprovided, *I have nothing to set* 7 *before him* for his refreshment: *And he from within*, instead of granting his request immediately, *shall* at first be unwilling to do it, and *answer* him, *and say, Do not disturb me* at so late an hour; for *the door is now shut* and fastened, *and my children are with me in bed* and asleep; so that *I cannot rise to give thee* what 8 thou askest. Yet if he still go on to press him that he would consider his necessity, and comply with his request, *I tell you, Though he would not rise and give him* the loaves that he desired, *because he was his* neighbour and *friend, yet on account of his importunity*, as he continues knocking, and will take no denial, *he will* at length *get up, and give him as many as he wants.* 9 Now then, if one who was at first unwilling to regard his friend was overcome at last by his continued earnestness, and yielded to his importunity, much more will God, who is infinitely good and rich in mercy, though he may not see fit to answer you immediately, be certainly prevailed upon at length to give you what you stand in need of, if you continue to be earnest and importunate in your prayers to him: *and I say* therefore *to you*, Whatever mercy you desire to obtain, *ask* it of God with a continued fervency, *and it shall* assuredly *be given you: seek* it with diligence, *and you shall find* it; and if it be a while delayed, *knock* with an earnest importu-

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him:

7 And he from within shall answer, and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend; yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find;

[c] *Who* is there *of you* that has not observed the efficacy of importunate requests?] The words in the original do not make a complete grammatical sentence: but such accidental inaccuracies are sometimes to be found in the most approved authors. The sense is not the less plain.

knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
10 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

nity at the door of divine mercy, *and it shall* at length *be opened to you.* And the success of others may encourage you to this, as what indeed has been confirmed by happy and constant experience: *for every one that asks*, with an unwearied fervency, *receives; and he that* diligently *seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocks*, again and again, though for a little while there may be some delay, *it shall* at length *be opened.* (Compare Mat. vii. 7, 8, sect. xlii.) SECT. CIX. Luke XI. 10.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

And, further to assist your faith on these occasions, reflect upon the workings of your own hearts towards your offspring, and consider, *What father is there among you, who, if a son* of his *shall ask* him *for bread, will give him a stone? or if* [*he ask*] him *for a fish, instead of a fish will give him a serpent? Or if he ask* him *for an egg, will* be so unnatural as to *give him a scorpion?* and, in the room of what is necessary for the support of life, will offer him a thing that would be useless or injurious to him. 11 12

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

If you then, who are, at least comparatively *evil*, and perhaps some of you inclined to a penurious and morose temper, yet *know how to give good gifts to your children*, and find your hearts disposed to relieve their returning necessities by a variety of daily provisions; *how much more shall* [*your*] *heavenly Father*, who is infinitely powerful and gracious, and who himself has wrought these dispositions in you, be ready to bestow every necessary good, and even to *give the* best and the most excellent gift of all, his *Holy Spirit, to them that* sincerely and earnestly *ask him* for it; to produce and cherish in their hearts those graces which may fit them for the services of life, and for the joys of an happy immortality? (Compare Mat. vii. 9, 10, 11, Vol. I. p. 244.) 13

IMPROVEMENT.

WELL does this petition become every *disciple of Christ*, *Lord, teach us to pray!* Thou hast taught us by thine example, and by the precepts of thy word; teach us also by thine Holy Spirit! Excellent is this *form of sound* and divine words, which our great Master here recommends. God forbid, that any of his followers should censure their brethren, who think it still proper to use it, not only as a *directory*, but as a form too, Ver. 1.

SECT. CIX. though perhaps with some little variation from the *original sense* of some clauses of it.[d] Let us attentively study it, that, concise and expressive as it is, our thoughts may go along with its several *petitions.*

Ver. 2, 3, 4 Let us learn to reverence and love *God*, and to consider ourselves as *brethren* in his family. Let the glory of *his name*, and the prosperity of *his kingdom*, be much dearer to us than any separate interest of our own. Let it be our cordial desire, that *his will* may be universally obeyed, and with the most entire consent of soul acquiesced in, by all his creatures, both in *heaven* and *on earth*. Let our appetites and passions be so moderated, that *having* even the plainest *food and raiment, we may be therewith content:* and, on the other hand, how plentiful soever our circumstances may be, let us remember, that *day by day* we depend on God for our *daily bread.* Nor do we need even the most necessary supplies of life more than we need *daily pardon;* to which, therefore, we should be putting in our constant claim, heartily *forgiving all our brethren*, as we desire to be *forgiven by God.* Conscious of our own weakness, let us, as far as we can, endeavour to avoid circumstances of *temptation;* and when necessarily led into them, let us be looking up to heaven for support; labouring above all things to preserve our integrity, and to maintain a *conscience void of offence.*

9, 10 Depending on the certainty of these gracious *promises*, and encouraged by the *experience* of so many thousands, who have on *asking received*, and on *seeking found*, let us renew our importunate addresses to the throne of divine grace: and, remembering the *compassion* of our *heavenly Father*, let us be emboldened, in the *full assurance of faith*, to ask every necessary blessing, especially the communication of that enlightening and sanctifying *Spirit*, without which our corrupt hearts will find out a ready way to abuse the choicest of his providential favours, to the dishonour of his holy name, and the deeper wounding of our own miserable souls.

[d] With some little variation from the *original sense*, &c.] Dr Guyse has excellently shewn in his note on Mat. vi. 13, that this prayer in its original sense was peculiarly suited to the dispensation then present, as introductory to the Messiah's kingdom, and has given a just, and very expressive paraphrase of it in that particular view. But there is not a clause in it, which will not bear a more extensive sense, and express what ought to be our daily temper, and the breathings of our heart before God. No doubt, thousands of Christians have daily refreshment and edification in the use of it; and it is astonishing, that any should venture to condemn their brethren for it. But I would hope there are few of any profession now remaining, who have so much of the spirit of opposition and censoriousness.

SECT. CX.

Our Lord dining at the house of a Pharisee, seriously admonishes him and his brethren of their guilt and danger; by which they are exasperated rather than reformed. Luke XI. 37, *to the end.*

LUKE XI. 37.

SECT. CX.

Luke XI. 37.

AND as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

NOW, after our Lord had delivered these things, it happened one day, that *while he was speaking* to the people about the great concerns of their eternal salvation,[a] *a certain Pharisee* then present *invited him to dine with him; and*, with whatever view he might do it, Jesus, that *he* might not seem morose, or insensible of a civility, accepting the offer, *went in* to his house, *and sat down to table.*

38 And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

38 *And when the Pharisee* who had invited him *saw that he* was regardless of the tradition of the elders, and *did not first wash before dinner*, according to the constant custom of their sect, *he wondered* [*at it*,] considering the character he had for an extraordinary degree of sanctity.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter: but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

39 *But the Lord*, perceiving his thoughts, and knowing that in some circumstances a faithful reproof is the most valuable token of friendship and gratitude, *said to him*, As I see you are *now* offended at my neglecting the ceremony of washing before dinner, I cannot but plainly tell you, that *you Pharisees* are too much like those vain people that *cleanse* only *the outside of the cup and the dish, while* the inside, which is of much greater importance, is left dirty and foul; for with regard to many of you, *your inward part*, even your very heart and conscience, *is* defiled, being *full of rapine, and* of all the foul-

[a] It happened one day, that *while he was speaking*, &c.] The attentive reader will easily observe that I have here omitted what occurs from the end of the 13th to the beginning of the 37th verse. That passage is inserted, § lxi—lxiv. as being exactly parallel to Mat. xii. 22, *& seq.* and Mark iii. 22, *& seq.* Nor could I see any proof, that the same discourse, with just the very same circumstances, happened again here; and as this seemed improbable, in proportion to the variety and resemblance of those circumstances, I thought it was better thus to transpose Luke's story, than to take the repetition for granted.—The phrase εν δε τω λαλησαι, *while he was speaking*, will, I think, fairly admit the turn I have given it in the paraphrase; but if any judge otherwise, it will be easy to turn back to the passage as inserted before, Vol. I. p. 336, *& seq.* and all I have said above to introduce the section before us will be true on that supposition.

SECT. CX.

Luke XI. 40

est kinds of pollution and *wickedness*. But let me seriously ask you, *O* ye *thoughtless creatures*,[b] and let me charge you that ye ask yourselves, *Did not he that made the outside, make also that which is within?* Did not the same God that created the body, create the soul too? and must he not intimately know his own work, and discern and abhor all those secret abominations, which, in contempt of his omniscience, you study so artfully to conceal from your fellow-creatures? (Compare Psal. xciv. 8, 9.)

40 Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 I would therefore, from the sincerest concern for your true honour and happiness, exhort you, not only to purge yourselves from secret wickedness, *but* to abound in the exercise of universal goodness, and particularly to *give alms* with liberality *in proportion to your substance*:[c] *and* then, if it be done from a right principle, *behold*, God, the great Proprietor of all, will accept and bless you; and though you should not be so exact in this outward washing, *all things are pure to you*, so that you may use them with comfort; whereas now you do, as it were, pollute and profane every thing you touch, and all the water in the world cannot wash away the stain. (See Tit. i. 15.)

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have: and behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 *But* alas, you seem little disposed to attend to this kind and faithful advice; and therefore my character obliges me solemnly to warn you of those approaching judgments, which, if speedy repentance does not prevent, will shortly over-

42 But wo unto

[b] *O ye thoughtless creatures.*] As ἄφρονες is a milder word than μωροὶ, I chose to render it thus, rather than as in our translation; (see note [m] on Mat. v. 22, Vol. I. p. 217.) The learned Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 227) explains the latter part of the verse as if it had been said, "*There* "*is a great deal of difference between clean-* "*ing the outside, and cleaning that which* "*is within*, and no such necessary con- "nection between them as you seem to "suppose." To justify this, he urges 2 Sam. xix. 24, and one passage in Aristophanes, where ποιεῖν signifies to *cleanse*; but the sense is so unusual, and that commonly received so much more lively and important, that I could not persuade myself to deviate from our translation here.

[c] *In proportion to your substance.*] Thus Grotius understands it. The learned Bos (Exercit p. 26.) has, I think, abundantly proved the words τὰ ἐνόντα (for καὶ τὰ ἐνόντα,) will very justly admit this sense, and are thus used by some of the best Greek classics. No other seems to agree so well with the connection; not even that ingenious turn of Raphelius, (Annot. ex Xen. p. 93—96,) who explains τὰ ἐνόντα, by τὸ ἐν τῷ τὰ πόληια καὶ τῆς παροψιδος, Mat. xxiii. 26, or *that which is within the cup and dish*, as if it had been said, "Give meat to the hun- "gry, and drink to the thirsty, and make "a liberal distribution of *those things* "*that are within the cup and the dish.*" But the last view in which τὸ ἐνθεν had been mentioned was, as expressing *the temper of the heart*, (ver. 40,) which is a strong objection against this great man's interpretation.

you Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment, and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

take your whole sect, numerous and honoured as it is. *Wo* therefore *unto you, Pharisees! for,* to gain the admiration of the priests and the people, *you* most scrupulously *pay the tithe of mint, and rue, and every* [*other*] trifling *herb* that grows in your gardens, and expect to recommend yourselves to the divine acceptance by such kind of observances; *but,* at the same time, you shamefully *pass by* and carelessly neglect the practice of righteous *judgment* to your fellow creatures, *and* of *the love of God* your Creator, as if they were matters of but little importance; whereas indeed *these* are the duties that *you* more especially *ought to have done; and* yet I own you ought *not to neglect the other,* as even the least of God's commands are to be revered and obeyed. (See Mat. v. 19.)

SECT. CX. Luke XI. 42.

43 Wo unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

43 *Wo unto you, Pharisees,* on account of your pride, which appears on every occasion, and in every affair of life! *for you love the uppermost seats* in all assemblies, even *in the* very *synagogues* where you meet to humble yourselves before God; *and* mightily affect *salutations in the markets,* and other public places, by titles of distinguished respect, as the guides and fathers of the people, the oracles of truth, and the standards of holiness. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 6—10, sect. clvii.)

44 Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them.*

44 *Wo unto you* also, *O* ye *scribes and Pharisees,* on account of your deceit, as under all those appearances of the strictest sanctity you are the most egregious *hypocrites* of the age![d] *for* I may truly say that *you are like concealed graves,*[e] *which,* being overgrown with grass, *men walk over, and are not aware of* [*them,*] till they stumble at them, and are hurt, or at least defiled by the touch of them.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers,

45 *And one of the doctors of the law,*[f] who hap-

[d] *O* ye *scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.*] Though some copies want these words, and Grotius and Dr. Mill give them up, I think Dr. Whitby is right in retaining them; especially because they so much illustrate verse 45. See Whitb. Exam. Mill. p. 46.

[e] *Are like concealed graves.*] The discourse against the Pharisees, which is recorded Mat. xxiii. (sect. clvii. clviii.) was plainly delivered at another time, and in very different circumstances. Our Lord there compares them to *whited sepulchres,* ver. 27, adorned on the outside, but defiled within: but here to *graves overgrown with grass,* which might often happen to be by the way-side; (compare Gen. xxxv. 19.) and so might occasion such accidents as are here referred to.

[f] *One of the doctors of the law.*] I apprehend that νομικὸς, may well be ren-

SECT. CX. Luke XI. 45.

pened to be present, observing that in this last woe Jesus mentioned the scribes, who were a body of men to whom he and his brethren belonged, *answered and said unto him, Master*, in *saying these things, thou reproachest* not only the sect of the Pharisees, but *us too*, in a manner unbecoming the dignity of our holy profession, as the depositaries of the sacred oracles.

and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 *But* Jesus was so far from palliating the matter to ingratiate himself with them, that *he* plainly and courageously *said*, Nay, it is a righteous rebuke, and I intend it for you, and therefore particularly repeat it for your admonition: *Wo unto you also, ye* professed *interpreters of the law! for*, by your rigorous decisions on the ceremonial parts of it, and the human traditions which you have added to it, *you load* other *men with insupportable burdens, and* unmercifully lay them on, while *you yourselves will not touch the burdens with one of your fingers*,[g] but suffer your lives to contradict your precepts, even in some of the most important instances.

46 And he said, Wo unto you also, ye lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 I also solemnly denounce a *wo unto you* all, for the malignity and cruelty of your tempers under this mask of piety and devotion! *for* at a great expence *you build* and adorn *the sepulchres of the prophets*, as if you had a mighty veneration *and* affection for them, though *your fathers slew them*. 48 But as you are regardless of the instructions that the prophets gave, and appear in your conduct to imitate your fathers, *truly you bear witness to* them, rather than against them, *and* in effect *approve* and vindicate *the works of your fathers*;[h] *for* as *they indeed*

47 Wo unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets; and your fathers killed them,

48 Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them,

dered, *a doctor or interpreter of the law*: which I generally choose, rather than the word lawyer, because that naturally suggests to us a modern idea of an office which did not exist among the Jews at this time, and has strangely misled some interpreters. These Jewish lawyers, (as our translation calls them,) were the most considerable species of scribes, who applied themselves peculiarly to study and explain the law. Probably many of them were Pharisees; but it was no ways essential to their office that they should be so. What touched the person here speaking, was, that our Lord in his last *woe*, ver. 44. had joined the scribes with the Pharisees.

[g] *Will not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.*] Perhaps their consciences might charge them with some private contempt of the injunction they most rigorously imposed upon others, in ceremonial precepts, as well as moral; or it may refer to the want of a due tenderness for the comfort of mens' lives, which they imbittered by such rigour. This seems to prove against Trigland, (de Karæis, p. 58, & *seq.*) that these lawyers were not Karaites; for these added not traditionary burdens to the law.

[h] *And* in effect *approve* and vindicate *the works of your fathers.*] Archbishop

and ye build their sepulchres.

slew them, and you build their sepulchres, one would imagine that you erected these monuments not so much in honour of the slaughtered prophets as of the persecutors by whom they were so wickedly destroyed. (Compare Matt. xxiii. 29—32, sect. clviii.)

SECT. CX. Luke XI. 48.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

Therefore, also the wisdom of God hath said,[i] and I am in his name commissioned to declare it as his determinate purpose, *I will* yet *send them* other *prophets and* extraordinary messengers, particularly the *apostles,* who shall declare my gospel to them, as the last expedient for their recovery and salvation: but such I know to be the hardness of their hearts, that they will generally despise *and* reject them; nay, [*some*] *of them they will kill, and* will *persecute* the rest: 49

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

So that by filling up the measure of their sins, they will bring such a terrible destruction upon themselves, *that the blood of all the prophets* and martyrs *which has been* cruelly *shed from the foundation of the world, may* seem to *be required of this generation;* 50

51 From the blood of Abel, unto the blood of Zecharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall

Even *from the blood of* righteous *Abel,* who in those early ages for his distinguished piety was murdered by his inhuman brother, *to the blood of Zechariah*[k] one of the last of the prophets, *who was slain between the altar and the temple,* (2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22.) *Yea,* in the strongest terms *I tell you,* and repeat it again, The ruin God will bring upon you in his righteous judgment shall be so dreadful, that *it shall* seem as if the guilt of all their blood had been laid up in store, that it might *be required* at the hands *of this* 51

Tillotson (Vol. II. p. 195, 196.) has set this text in a most strong and beautiful light, and hinted the turn which I have given it in the paraphrase.

[i] *Therefore also the wisdom of God hath said.*] Dr. Guyse (with Markius, Exerc. p. 669,) paraphrases this clause as the words of the historian, and supposes him here to apply this character to Christ, and to declare that *Christ, the wisdom of God, farther said, I will send them prophets,* &c.—I doubt not but Christ might with great propriety be spoken of by that phrase: but, with all due respect to that learned and pious interpreter, I cannot apprehend it to be the sense of this passage; not only because the phraseology is unexampled in the evangelists, but chiefly because our Lord does not say, I send to *you,* but to *them.* Yet I see no reason to conclude (with Mr. Whiston, in his Essay for restoring the Old Testament, p. 228;) that this is a quotation from any ancient writer. Christ was empowered, without any such voucher, to declare what the counsels of Divine wisdom had determined; and this manner of speaking strongly intimates, that he was so; in which view it has, on this interpretation, a peculiar beauty and propriety.

[k] *The blood of Zechariah.*] What reason there is to conclude, the Zechariah here spoken of is that prophet, of whose death we have an account in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, *& seq.* will be shewn in note [s] on Mat. xxiii. 35, sect. clviii.

SECT CX.

generation, and heap aggravated ruin on their heads. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 34—36, sect. clviii.)

be required of this generation.

Luke VI. 52.

And I will add, that the disguises thrown on scripture, and the methods used to conceal it from the people, have done a great deal to bring on this terrible sentence: *wo* therefore *unto you, interpreters of the law*, on this account! *for* by these unrighteous practices *you have* as it were *taken away the key of* divine *knowledge*;[l] and instead of tracing out a spiritual Messiah in scripture, and illustrating the testimony which the sacred oracles bear to him, you have rather abetted the popular prejudices against him; and have been so perverse and obstinate in your opposition to the gospel, as that *you have not entered in* to the kingdom of heaven *yourselves, and* even *those that* otherwise were disposed to do it, and *would have entered in, you* by your wicked management *have hindered.*

52 Wo unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 *But while he spake these* severe and awful *things* with so much freedom *to them, the scribes and Pharisees* were so exceedingly provoked, that they *began fiercely to fasten upon him*,[m] *and rudely* endeavoured *to urge him to speak of many things* that were the 54 most exceptionable topics: Thereby *laying snares for him, and attempting*, if possible, *to start some* unguarded *word*,[n] which

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things:

54 Laying wait for him and seeking to catch something out

[l] *The key of knowledge.*] Vitringa understands this of one fundamental truth, which would have led them into a knowledge of the rest: (Observ. Sacr. lib. i. p. 125;) but all their endeavours to embarrass, and bias the minds of men, in their inquiries after truth might be included here; as well as more especially their disguising the prophecies which related to the Messiah.—If a key was delivered to them, as the badge of their office, (see Vol. I. p. 485, note s, and Camero on this place,) there may be a beautiful allusion to that circumstance; as if he should have said, *You take that key, not to use, but to secrete it.* (See Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. I. p. 208.)—Elsner has well shewn on this text, that the heathen priests were called κλειδοῦχοι, *key-bearers.* Observ. Vol. I. p. 228, 229.

[m] *Fiercely to fasten upon him.*] So δεινως ἐχειν properly signifies. (see notes on Mark vi. 19, Vol. I. p. 198.)—Several more of the words here used are metaphors taken from hunting. Ἀποστοματιζειν might be rendered to mouth or bear down with the violence of their words, as Theophylact excellently explains it; but the addition of παρὰ πλειονων engaged me rather to translate it as I have done. Grotius and Casaubon have shewn that it sometimes signifies *to examine in a magisterial way*; but Erasmus's note is, on the whole, the best I have seen upon this word.

[n] *To start some unguarded word.*] Θηρευσαι in this connection has a most beautiful propriety, and signifies the eagerness with which sportsmen beat about for their game, to start it from its covert.—It is very probable, as Mr Cradock conjectures, that the Pharisee, who was master of the house, had invited a great many of his brethren, and learned friends, on purpose to make a more formidable attack upon Christ, and by their concurrent

of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

they hoped might fall *from his mouth* in the warmth of natural resentment; *that they might* take occasion to *accuse him* for it before the Roman governor, or the Jewish sanhedrim; but the prudence of Christ frustrated their malice, in the midst of all the plainness of his faithful rebukes. SECT. CX. Luke XI. 54

IMPROVEMENT.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; and such were the reproofs of *Christ* on this occasion. How well had all the entertainments of the *Pharisee*'s table been repaid, had he and his brethren heard them with candour, humility, and obedience! These men despised them to *their ruin:* let us often review them for our instruction, that none of these dreadful *woes* may come upon us. Verse 39 & *seq.* 51

This discourse of *our Lord* is a most just and severe rebuke to every *hypocritical* professor, who is scrupulous and exact in matters of *ceremony*, while he neglects *morality;* and is studious to shine in the sight of men, while he forgets the all-penetrating eye of God. It exposes the *ostentation* of those who pride themselves in empty *titles of honour*, and eagerly affect *precedence* and *superiority*. And it evidently chastises those who *press on others* the duties they *neglect themselves*, and so are most righteously *judged out of their own mouth.* 39, 42 43 46

How melancholy is it to observe, in instances like these, the *hypocrisy* and deceitfulness of the human heart, and its desperate and unfathomable wickedness! and to see how men impose upon themselves with empty appearances, like these *Pharisees;* who *built the sepulchres of the* former *prophets*, while they were *persecuting* those of their own day; and, in contempt of all that was said by the messengers of God, were *filling up the measure of their iniquities*, till the cloud which had been so long gathering burst on their heads, and poured forth a storm of aggravated wrath and ruin! 44 47, 49 50, 51

May that God who has an immediate access to the hearts of men, deliver all *Christian* countries, and especially all *Protestant* churches, from such *teachers* as are here described: who *take away* and secrete *the key of knowledge* instead of using it, and *obstruct*, rather than promote mens *entrance* into the kingdom of heaven! How loud will *the blood* of the souls they have betrayed cry against them in the awful day of accounts! and how little will the *wages of unrighteousness*, and the rewards of world- 52

testimony to charge upon him any thing which might render him obnoxious: and the presence of so many of them made the discourse delivered at this time more proper, and the courage and zeal it expressed more remarkable. See Cradock's Harmony, part. ii. p. 6.

ly policy, be able to warn them against *destruction*, or to support them under it!

SECT. CXI.

Christ cautions his disciples against hypocrisy, and animates them against the fear of men by the promise of extraordinary assistance from his Spirit in their greatest trials. Luke XII. 1—12.

LUKE XII. 1.

SECT. CXI. Luke XII. 1

IN the mean time, while Christ was thus discoursing at the Pharisee's house, *many thousands of people were gathered together,*[a] and pressed with *so* much eagerness to hear him, *that they* even *trampled on each other: and* [*Jesus*] going forth among them, *began to say to his disciples* in the presence of them all, See that you more especially beware, and *above all things take heed to yourselves of* being corrupted by *the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy*: a vice which secretly puffs up their minds, and strangely spreads itself through their hearts and lives, so as to taint and spoil the very best of

2 their duties. But seriously reflect upon the folly of it; *for* you may assure yourselves, as I have told you formerly, (Mat. x. 26; Mark iv. 22; and Luke viii. 17;) that *there is nothing* now so secretly *concealed which shall not be* discovered, and be openly *unveiled* another day; *nor* any thing so artfully disguised or *hid, which shall not* then at least *be made known*, if God does not more immediately expose those shallow artifices which he now discerns and abhors.

3 *So that whatever you have spoken* with the utmost caution, *in* the thickest *darkness, shall* then *be* published and *heard in the* clearest effulgence of *light*: *and what you have whispered in* the most retired chambers and *closets, shall* then *be proclaimed* aloud as *from the house-tops* in the audience of all.

LUKE XII. 1.

IN the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light: and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

[a] *Many thousands of people were gathered together.*] It would be more exactly rendered *many myriads*; but lest every English reader should not know that *a myriad* is ten thousand, I render it *many thousands*; nor is it necessary to take the word in its strictest sense. Perhaps this vast assemblage of people might be owing to an apprehension, either that Christ might meet with some ill usage among so many of his enemies, or that he would say, or do something peculiarly remarkable on the occasion—Compare Luke v. 17, 19. § xlv.

SECT. CXI. Luke XII. 4.

4 And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.

And therefore let it be your care, not merely to save appearances, but to maintain a good conscience, though at the greatest expence: for *I say unto you, my* dear *friends*, with all possible seriousness, and most tender concern for your everlasting welfare, *Fear not those who* at the worst can only *kill the body, and after that have nothing more which they can do*, the immortal soul being entirely out of their reach as soon as it has quitted the body.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

But I will 5 *point out to you* the great Object *whom you shall fear*, while I exhort you most reverentially to *fear* the great Almighty God, even *him, who, after he has killed* the body, *has power to cast* both that and the soul *into hell; yea*, knowing that I cannot too often inculcate it, *I say unto you* again, *Fear him*, and rather choose to venture on the greatest dangers, and to sacrifice your lives, than to do any thing which may offend his Divine Majesty. (Compare Mat. x. 28, Vol. I. p. 416.)

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

In the mean time, remember, that your ene- 6 mies cannot hurt even your bodies without his knowledge and permission; for his Providence extends itself even to the meanest works of his hands: for instance, *Are not five sparrows sold for* so inconsiderable a sum as *two farthings?* [b] and *yet not one of them*, minute and worthless as they are, *is forgotten before God;* but he attends to all the circumstances of their lives and deaths.

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered, Fear not, therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Surely then you will not be overlooked 7 by him; *but* may justly conclude, that he has such a special and particular concern for you, as that *even the very hairs of your head are all numbered*, so that not one of them can perish without his notice. *Fear not therefore;* for as men, and much more as my servants and friends, *you are more valuable than many sparrows*, and will be more remarkably his care than they.

8 Also I say unto

But howsoever he may now permit you to be 8 persecuted by your enemies for your fidelity to me—though he should even suffer you to sacrifice your lives in so honourable a cause, you will be far from being losers by it in the end:

[b] *For two farthings, ασσαριων δυο.*] This was a Roman coin that was then current in Judea, called *as*, or anciently *assarius*, which was the tenth part of the denarius, or Roman penny, in value about *three farthings* of our money. Two sparrows might be bought for one, and five for two of these. Compare Mat. x. 29, sect. lxxvi.

SECT. CXI. Luke XII. 8

for *I say unto you*, That *if any one shall* freely *acknowledge* his faith in *me before men*,[c] *the Son of man* himself *shall also acknowledge* his complacency in such a person, and his relation to *him*, even *before the angels of God*, when they

you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

9 come to attend on his final triumph. *But as for him that* basely and perfidiously *renounces me before men*, and is ashamed or afraid of maintaining so good a cause, *him will I* also *renounce before the* holy *angels of God*,[d] when they appear in a radiant circle around me, and wait, with solemn and observant silence, the important event of that awful day. (Compare Mat. x. 29—33, Vol. I. p. 418.)

9 But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

10 Nothing can therefore be more dangerous and fatal than to oppose my cause, *and* that especially when the Spirit is sent down on my followers after my resurrection and ascension: for *whosoever shall speak a* reflecting *word against the Son of man* in this present state of his humiliation and suffering, he may possibly hereafter repent, and on that repentance *it may be forgiven him*:[e] *but as for him that blasphemeth the Holy Spirit*, who shall then display his most glorious agency as my great Advocate and Witness; as for the wretch that maliciously imputes to diabolical operation the most convincing evidences of divine power and goodness that shall be given by the Spirit after his effusion, his crime is of such a nature, that *it shall not be forgiven him*; for he has thus opposed the last method of God's recovering grace, and shall, as utterly incorrigible, be abandoned to final destruction. (See Mat. xii. 31, and note[p], Vol. I. p. 340.)

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

[c] *If any one shall acknowledge me*, &c.] The idioms of languages differ so much, that what is very elegant and proper in one may, if verbally translated, be contrary to grammar in another. This verse and the following are instances of it. It seems to me a kind of superstition, to scruple such little changes as I have here made.

[d] *Him will I* also *renounce*, &c.] Nothing can be more majestic, than this view which Christ gives of himself. To be *renounced by him* is spoken of as a circumstance, which would expose a man to the contempt of the whole angelic world, and leave him no remaining shelter or hope. Compare Mat. vii. 23, sect. xliii. note[d], Vol. I. p. 250, and John v. 22, *& seq.* sect. xlvii. note[h], p. 272.

[e] *It may be forgiven him.*] The common rendering of ἀφιθησεται is more literal; but the connection shews it must be taken as here; for it would be madness to imagine that, in such a case as this, *forgiveness* must come of course, whether the blasphemer did or did not repent. What grammarians call an enallage of moods and tenses is very frequent; and I shall not always think it necessary to trouble the reader with an apology, when the reason of the change is so evident

SECT. CXI.

Luke. XII. 11.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say.

But let me add, that however others may be affected by this testimony of the Spirit, one happy effect of its operation shall be to furnish you, my apostles, for an honourable discharge of your office in its most difficult parts: and therefore, in the opposition you shall meet with from your enemies and persecutors, *when they shall bring you before* the judicial courts which assemble in *the synagogues, and* even before greater *magistrates, and* the supreme *powers*, whether Jewish or heathen; though they may have, not only your liberty, but your life in their hands, yet *be not anxious how* to behave, *or what apology you shall make* for yourselves,[f] *or what you shall say* in defence of the gospel you preach: *For* 12 *the Holy Spirit* himself *shall teach you in that very hour*, or in the season of the greatest dificulty and extremity, *what you ought to say*, and what answer you should make to their most captious inquiries, or most invidious charges: (compare Mat. x. 19, 20, sect. lxxv.) Proper thoughts and expressions shall freely flow in upon you as fast as you can utter them; so that with undaunted courage you shall be able to vindicate the honour of my gospel, and to confound the most artful or most potent of your enemies.

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour, what ye ought to say.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us from this discourse which we have been reading, learn Ver. 1 the *folly of hypocrisy*, as well as the *wickedness* of it. *A lying tongue is but for a moment*; (Prov. xii. 19;) and the great approaching *judgment-day* will shew all in their true colours. May we live as those who are then to be *made manifest!* May the *leaven* of deceit, by divine grace, be entirely purged out of our hearts; and all our conduct be so fair and equal, that it may appear more honourable and lovely, in proportion to the accuracy with which it is examined; as the whitest garments are recommended, by being seen in the strongest light! 2, 3

If we would preserve such an integrity of soul, let us endeavour

[f] *Be not anxious how* to behave, *or what apology you shall make* for yourselves.] It is not without reason that Christ so often touches on this topic. The apostles, being poor and illiterate men, would naturally have been thrown into confusion when they appeared as criminals in the presence of persons in the highest stations of life; and their solicitude would be in some measure proportionable to their piety, if they apprehended the gospel, which was dearer to them than their own lives, might suffer by the hurry and disorder of their thoughts, when they were thus called publicly to defend it. Compare note [c] on Mat. x. 19, Vol. I. p. 414.

SECT. CXI. to get above the servile *fear of man: of man, that shall die, and of the son of man, that shall be made as grass; as if the oppressor* had us in his power, and *were ready to destroy: and where is the* Ver 4. *fury of the oppressor?* (Isa. li. 12, 13.) With what infinite ease
5 can God restrain it; and, when it is let loose in all its violence, how little can it do to hurt his faithful servants! Let this mean passion be over-awed by *the fear of* that *God*, who has *our eternal all* in his hands; whose vengeance, or favour, will reach " far beyond the grave, and determine our final misery or felicity, as we are the objects of the one or the other.

6, 7 While we are in the world, let us labour after a firm faith in the *universality of Divine Providence;* from which *the least* of his *creatures* are not exempted, nor are they forgotten by it. Let us endeavour to enjoy the pleasure and comfort of such a thought; assuring ourselves, that He who regards the life of *birds*, and of *insects*, will not neglect the care and preservation of *his children.*

8, 9 In a steady persuasion of this, let us determine courageously to *confess* and maintain his gospel in the extremest danger; knowing that thus only we shall secure the honour of being *owned by Christ*, amidst all the glories of his final appearance.

11, 12 And, in a word, to animate us to this holy courage, and to assist us in every other duty, let us earnestly pray for the *Holy Spirit*; by whose influence the *apostles* were instructed and supported in the discharge of their difficult and various offices; whose *grace* therefore must be abundantly *sufficient for us*, to cause us *to abound in every good word and work.* (2 Cor. ix. 8.)

SECT. CXII.

Christ, being desired to interpose in a dispute between two brethren about property, declines the decision of the case; and takes occasion to advance a caution against covetousness, which he enforces by the parable of the rich fool. Luke XII. 13—21.

LUKE XII. 13.

SECT. CXII. *AND* while he was discoursing thus to his disciples, *one of the crowd* that was then Luke about Jesus, *said to him, Master,* I desire thou XII. 13 wouldst *speak to my brother, that he would* agree to *divide the inheritance with me,* which since the death of our father he injuriously detains to himself; for thou art well known to be a Person of such an extraordinary character, that I would hope his reverence to thine authority may induce him to do me justice.

LUKE XII. 13. AND one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 *But* Jesus, as *he* did not come to meddle in

14 And he said

unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

such matters, prudently *replied*,[a] *Man*, what dost thou mean by such a rash appeal to me? *Who constituted me a judge* in temporal concerns, *or* set me up as *a divider over you?* My kingdom is of a spiritual nature; and as to the civil rights and properties of men I intermeddle not with them, but leave them just as I found them. (Compare Exod. ii. 14.)

SECT. CXII. Luke XII. 14

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

And upon this occasion, though *he* would not interpose in the affair, yet, to prevent their being fond of the enjoyments of the world, and to preserve them from a covetous disposition, Jesus *said* to his disciples, and *to them* that were present, *See to it, that* with the utmost care and resolution *you be upon your guard against* all kinds and degrees of *covetousness*;[b] *for* though it be a common, it is a very unreasonable vice; since it is evident, that the comfort and happiness of *a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions*; nor can the continuance of his life, even for the shortest period of time, be secured by that abundance. 15

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully.

And, to enforce and illustrate this remark, *he spake a* very instructive *parable to them, and said, There was a certain rich man, whose ground bore fruit* so *plentifully*, that he had not room to receive and lay up in store the vast produce of his harvest. 16

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

And he found all his plenty an encumbrance to him, so that he *reasoned with himself*, not without some considerable anxiety of mind, *saying, What shall I do? for I have not room* at present *to store up my crop*, should I stow it ever so close. 17

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater;

And, after some pause, *he* came to a resolution, and *said, I will do this*, as what appears to me the wisest scheme; *I will pull down my* old *barns, and build* new, which shall be *larger*, and much more commo- 18

[a] *He* prudently *replied.*] This appellant probably thought, that as the Messiah, he would act in the character of a prince, who would decide controversies relating to property.—My rendering the phrase, *he said unto him*, by the equivalent word *replied*, will not, I hope, be thought to need any apology.

[b] *See to it, that* with the utmost care, *you be upon your guard against* all kinds and degrees of *covetousness.*] Ὁρᾶτε καὶ φυλάσσεσθε is a lively phrase, the full force of which I have endeavoured to express in the paraphrase, not being able exactly to do it in the version. (Compare note [c] on Mat. xvi. 6, Vol. I. p. 479.)—Some old versions and very good copies read it, *from all covetousness*; to which I have shewn so much regard, as to insert the word *all* in the paraphrase; as it is certain, at least, that our Lord intended the caution in this extent, whether he did or did not so particularly express it.

SECT. CXII.

dious than they; *and there I will gather in all my* rich *increase* this year, *and* all *my goods* that I already have in store: *And* then *I will* retire from business, and sit down and enjoy the fruits of my former labours, and will *say to my soul* with complacency and confidence, O my *soul*, *thou hast* now an *abundance of goods laid up*, on which thou mayest comfortably subsist *for many* future *years; repose thyself* therefore after all thy fatigues; *eat* and *drink* freely, without any fear of exhausting thy stores; *and be* as *merry* as corn and wine, and oil, shared with thy most jovial companions, can make thee.

Luke XII. 19

and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 *But God* beheld him with just displeasure, and by the awful dispensation of his Providence in effect, *said to him*, amidst all this gaiety of heart, in the variety of his schemes and hopes, *Thou fool*, who dost thus stupidly forget both the dignity and the mortality of thy nature, and thy continual dependence upon me thy supreme Lord! know to thy terror, that while thou art talking of a long succession of pleasurable years, *this* very *night thy soul shall be demanded of thee*,[c] and be hurried away to its place; *and* then, where will all its boasted entertainments be, or *who shall possess what thou hast* thus laboriously *provided*, but shalt thyself never enjoy? And accordingly the unhappy creature died that night, and all his wealth could do no more for him than furnish out the expences of his funeral. 21 And *so*, or such a fool in the Divine account, [*is*] *he that heaps up treasures to himself* here on earth, *and is not rich with respect to God*[d] in acts of charity and piety, which would secure a fund of celestial treasures, lodged in his almighty hand, and therefore inviolably safe from such calamitous accidents as these.

20 But God *said* unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

[c] *Thy soul shall be demanded of thee.*] It is in the original, απαιτουσιν, *They shall demand thy soul.* Elsner thinks it alludes to the *messengers sent to fetch away the soul*; and produces a remarkable and well known passage from Plato, to prove that Socrates thought this the office of a spirit superior to men: See Elsner. Obser. Vol. I. p. 231.

[d] *Rich with respect to God.*] There is a force and propriety in the phrase ει; Θεον, which our language will not exactly express. It represents God as a depositary, in whose hands the good man has lodged his treasure; and who has, as it were, made himself accountable for it in another and better world. Compare Prov. xix. 17.

IMPROVEMENT.

MOST prudently did our Lord decline the invidious office of an *arbitrator* in civil affairs; and wisdom will require his *ministers* generally to avoid it likewise. It is more suitable to our office, like our blessed Master, to endeavour to draw off and disengage the minds of men from *covetousness*, and to pluck up the root of those eager *contentions* which so often divide even the *nearest relations*, and inspire them with mutual aversions, more invincible *than the bars of a castle.* (Prov. xviii. 19.) SECT. CXII. Verse 13, 14

And that a *covetous desire* of the enjoyments of the world may not create *contentions*, and engage us in pursuits that will be fatal to our souls, let us seriously consider the true value of things, and reflect how little *riches* can do to make us *happy*, if we obtain them; and how very uncertain that *life* is on the continuance of which our possession of them does so evidently depend. But, alas, how many are there, who are now as deeply engaged in their worldly schemes as this *rich fool* in the *parable*, to whom God will, in a few weeks, or days, if not *this very night*, say, by the awful voice of his irresistible providence, *thy soul is required of thee!* And then what will all these treasures do to purchase *life*, or to allay the agonies of *death?* So far will they be found from being capable of this, that they will rather serve to increase and imbitter the surprise and anguish of those agonies. 15 16 *& seq.* 20

Let it then be our labour and care, that we may be *rich towards God;* rich in works of piety and charity. So shall we safely consign over *our treasure* to the bank of heaven; and shall be *enriched* by it, when we leave the world as *naked* as we entered upon it, and lose all but what has been so wisely and happily spent. 21

SECT. CXIII.

Christ repeats the cautions and arguments against an anxious and covetous temper, which he had formerly given in his sermon on the mount. Luke XII. 22—34.

LUKE XII. 22.

AND he said unto

LUKE XII. 22.

THUS Jesus cautioned his followers against setting their hearts on worldly treasures; but as most of them were in such low circumstances as to be in greater danger of immoderate solicitude about the necessary supplies of life, he proceeded to caution them against this,

SECT. CXIII. Luke XII. 22.

by repeating some of those admonitions which he had formerly delivered in his sermon on the mount.[a] *And* accordingly *he said to his disciples, For this cause*, that is, considering the great uncertainty of riches, *I say to you*, and strictly charge it upon you, That you *be not anxious about your life, what you shall eat*, or how you shall procure food to support it; *nor for the body what you shall put on* to cover, defend, and adorn it.

his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 For you must needs be sensible, *the life* itself, which you have received from God without any care or thoughtfulness of yours, *is* much *more* important *than meat, and the body than raiment*; and well then may you hope that the great Author of your life, and the Former of your body, will maintain his own work, in a proper manner, without your anxiety and solici-

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

24 tude about it. Especially may you expect it, when you see the care which he takes of the inferior creatures: as, for instance, *consider the ravens*, how they are subsisted; *for they neither sow, nor reap, and have neither storehouse nor barn*, to lay up any thing against a time of want; nay, their young ones are early deserted by their dams; and *yet*, voracious as they are, *God* one way or other *feedeth them*, so that you see the species is still continued: now *how much more are you better than* they? and how much rather may you hope to be supplied with *the* necessaries of life, than any kind of *birds?* (Compare Mat. vi. 25, 26, Vol. I. p. 238.)

24 Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 *And* moreover, as this care is unnecessary, it will also be unprofitable: for, *which of you, by taking* the most solicitous *thought, can add a single cubit*, or the least measure or moment, either *to his age* or stature? (Compare Mat. vi.

25 And which of you, with taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit?

26 27, and note[h] on that text, sect. xli.) *If then you cannot do the least matter*,[b] as in this proverbial expression you grant, *why are you anxious about the rest*, as if you were to hold

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

[a] Repeating some of those admonitions, &c.] Most of the thoughts and expressions used here occurred before, sect. xli. and are, I hope, sufficiently explained there; I content myself therefore with referring the reader to it.

[b] *If then you cannot do the least matter.*] This proves, that *to add one cubit to a thing* was a proverbial expression for making the least addition to it.

your life by a kind of perpetual lease, and were secure against all danger of a sudden ejectment?

SECT. CXIII. Luke XII. 27

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not: and yet I say unto you, That Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

But, to pursue the argument I began before, Do but *consider* God's providential care, even of the vegetable creation: survey, for instance, *the* fair and beautiful *lilies*, and reflect *how they grow; they neither labour* to prepare the materials of their dress, *nor spin* it into that curious form; and *yet* Providence clothes them in so elegant and splendid a manner, that *I say unto you, Even Solomon*, when on some grand festival he appeared *in all his* utmost *magnificence, was not arrayed* in so beautiful a white *as one of these.*

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe you*, O ye of little faith?

28 *And if God so clothe* and adorn *the grass of the field*, among *which* the lilies grow, though it *is* [*flourishing*] *to-day* in all its verdure, *and* by *to-morrow is* cut down and *thrown into the furnace*, or still (see note [1] on Mat. vi. 30, § xli. p. 239,) *how much more* [*will he clothe*] *you, O ye of little faith*, who thus suspect his care?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, neither be ye *of doubtful mind.*[c]

29 *And do not you* then, who are acquainted with the care of Providence, and are particularly interested in it, be solicitous to *seek what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor be* like meteors in the air, that are tossed about by every blast of wind, hurried with anxious cares, and *agitated with* a variety of *restless* and uneasy *thoughts.*[c]

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

30 *For the* Gentile *nations of the world*, who know little of Providence, or of a future state, *seek after all these* lower *things* with great solicitude; and they are more excusable in doing it: *but* you are directed to much nobler objects of pursuit, and furnished with a more substantial support against such anxieties, in that paternal relation which God avows to you; and as *your* heavenly *Father* well *knows that you have need of these things*, he will certainly provide them for you in a proper degree. Leave them there.

31 But rather seek

[c] *Nor be agitated with restless thoughts.*] After all the various and perplexed things which critics have said on this word, μεριζεσθε (of which a very large account may be seen in the learned Wolfius,) the sense I have taken is the most simple, and, especially here, the most natural. The authorities produced by Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 233, 234,) and several of those mentioned by Raphelius, (Annot. ex Xen. p. 97, 98,) seem to me to favour this sense, though some of them are produced to establish another. It appears from them, that any speculations and musings, in which the mind fluctuates, or is suspended in an uneasy hesitation, might well be expressed by such a word.

SECT. CXIII. Luke XII. 31

fore to his care; and, low as your condition is, be not uneasy and disquieted about them: *but seek ye rather the kingdom of God*, and labour to promote its interest among men; *and* then you may depend upon it, not only that you shall obtain that most important prize, but likewise, that *all these* other necessary *things shall be added to you*, without your anxiety. (Compare Mat. vi. 31—33, Vol. I. p. 240.)

ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 I repeat the encouraging thought; *Fear not*, ye *little flock*, my dear property and charge, however feeble you may seem; fear not, I say, that you shall be left destitute of these common blessings of Divine Providence; *for it is your* heavenly *Father's* gracious *pleasure to give you* what is infinitely more valuable, even *the kingdom* of eternal glory: and can you possibly imagine that, while he intends to bestow that upon you, and even takes pleasure in the thought of making you so great and happy there,[d] he will refuse you those earthly supplies which he liberally imparts even to strangers and enemies?

32 Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Animated therefore by such a hope and confidence, instead of being solicitous to increase your possessions to the utmost, rather be prepared, when Providence shall call you, to *sell what you* already *have, and distribute, [it] in charity*;[e] and so you may *provide for yourselves purses which do not grow old* and wear out[f]

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves bags which wax not

[d] Takes pleasure in the thought of making you so great and happy there.] This is the beautiful and wonderful import of the word ευδοκησεν in this connection; which generally signifies *a pleasurable acquiescence*. And agreeably to this it is most edifying and delightful to observe how God is represented in scripture as enjoying his own prescience, as it were, with a peculiar relish, in the view of those glories which he has prepared for his people. Hence those emphatical phrases of *wisdom rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth*, or in the prospect and idea of them, before they were actually made; (Prov. viii. 31;) of *God's knowing the thoughts he thinks towards his people*; (Jer. xxix. 11;) and of *his rejoicing over them with joy*, and *silently resting in his love to them* (Zeph. iii. 17.) The tenderness and energy of innumerable scriptures depends on this remark; and many of those relating to election, predestination, &c. which have been as dry rods of controversy, when considered in this view, bud out into a thousand fair leaves and fragrant blossoms of hope and joy.

[e] *Sell what you have and distribute it in charity.*] These words were probably as a fruitful seed in the minds of some who heard them: and the liberal sale of estates a few months after, by which so many poor Christians were subsisted, might be in a great measure the harvest which sprung up from it under the cultivation of the blessed Spirit. Nothing is more probable than that some of the many myriads now attending our Lord (ver. 1.) might be in the number of the thousands then converted; see Acts ii. 41—45.

[f] *Purses which do not grow old*, and wear out.] This may be fitly taken as

old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

even *a never-failing treasure in heaven*, that region of security and immortality, *where no thief approaches* to plunder the riches of its inhabitants, *nor doth the moth* corrode and *spoil* the robes of glory in which they appear. And the more careful should you be about this heavenly treasure, *because* it is certain, that *where* that which you account *your* chief *treasure is* laid up, *there will your heart be also* fixed, and the whole tenor of your thoughts and affections will naturally flow in that channel. (Compare Mat. vi. 20, 21, Vol. I. p. 236.)

SECT. CXIII. Luke XII. 33. 34

IMPROVEMENT.

ARE we not all conscious to ourselves that on such topics as these, we need *line upon line, and precept upon precept*, as being too deficient in our *regard*, though *God speak once, yea twice?* (Job xxxiii. 14.) We see our heavenly Father *crowning the earth with his goodness:* to this day does he *clothe the grass and the flowers* with the same profusion of ornament; to this day does he *feed the young ravens when they cry*, (Psal. cxlvii. 9;) nor is the meanest species of *insects* perished. Still does he *know our necessities*; and still he addresses us in the same gracious language, and avows the same endearing paternal relation. The experience of his power, goodness, and fidelity, is increasing with every succeeding generation, with every revolving day. The *life* that he has given is supported by his care; and the same hand that formed *the body*, nourishes and clothes it. Let us then *cast all our care on him*, as being persuaded that *he careth for us*; (1 Pet. v. 7.) Feeble as his *little flock* is, *it is the Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom*; and we are unworthy our share in so glorious a hope, if we cannot trust him for inferior blessings, and refer it to him to judge in what manner our present wants are to be supplied.

Verse 22, 29 27, 28 24 30 23 32

Let the heathens abandon themselves to these low *anxieties*; but as for us, let us *thank God, and take courage*, opening our hearts wide to every sentiment of *faith* in God, and *charity* to men; and while we have this inexhaustible *bank* to draw upon, let us be *rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, so laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life*; (1 Tim. vi. 18, 19;) the very hope and expectation of which,

30 33

an allusion to the danger of losing money out of a hole worn in an old purse. Such is frequently the gain of this world, and so are its treasures hoarded up, and *put into a bag with holes*; (compare Hag. i. 6.) The rich men of Judea, so soon ravaged and destroyed by the Romans, particularly found it so.

SECT. CXIII. if *our heart* be set upon it, will give us incomparably sweeter delight than the securest possessions of this empty world, and the most ample magazines of its richest stores.
Ver. 34

SECT. CXIV.

Christ exhorts his disciples to watchfulness and fidelity, in expectation of his coming, and of the final account to be given for all their advantages. Luke XII. 35—48.

LUKE XII. 35.

SECT. CXIV. Luke XII. 35

OUR Lord having thus exhorted his disciples to a due moderation as to their worldly possessions, proceeded to press upon them a serious preparation for their final remove from earth, and for the awful solemnities of death, judgment, and eternity.[a] He therefore went on to say, Consider yourselves always as servants, who have a Master in heaven; and, that you may approve your diligence and fidelity to him, *let your loins be* still *girded up* in a posture for active service, *and your lamps* be continually
36 *burning* in readiness to receive him:[b] *And be you*, on the whole, *like men* in a waiting posture, *who*, as good servants left with a proper charge, attending to the work appointed them, *wait for their Lord's return from a marriage-feast*,[c] or any other late entertainment; *that when* ever *he comes and knocks* at the door, *they may immediately open* it *to him*, and not be sur-
37 prised in any disorder. *Happy are those servants,*

LUKE XII. 35.

LET your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the

[a] A serious preparation for—death, judgment, and eternity.] I shall give the reason of my interpreting this passage thus, a little below, in note [f], though I am sensible the generality of readers would rather have expected an apology if I had gone about to interpret it otherwise.

[b] *Let your loins be girded up, and your lamps burning.*] As the Easterns wore long garments, it was necessary that when they had any thing to do which required them to exert their strength or agility, they should tuck them up and *gird them* close; a practice to which there are frequent references, both in the Old Testament and the New. (See 1 Kings xviii. 46; 2 Kings iv. 29; Job xxxviii. 3; Jer. i. 17; Eph. vi. 14; and 1 Pet. i. 13.)—That the lamps should be found extinguished might be an inconvenient circumstance to the master, and would be a demonstration of the servant's idleness.—The expressions taken together may intimate the care we should take to inform ourselves in our duty, and the resolution with which we should apply to the performance of it.

[c] *From a marriage-feast.*] There is no particular mystery in this circumstance. Our Lord might probably instance in this, because *marriage feasts* were generally the most splendid, and so prolonged to the latest hours.

SECT. CXIV.

Luke XII. 37.

Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

whom, when [*their*] *Lord comes he shall find* thus *watching* for him: and happy also will you be, if this shall be your case: for *verily, I say unto you,* So condescending is your Lord and Master, *that,* if you answer this character, *he will* reward you as graciously as if some great man, absent on such an occasion as I have supposed, finding his servants diligently waiting for him at his return, should gather up his clothes and *gird himself, and cause them to sit down to supper, and* should *come forth* himself *and wait upon them.*[d] *And,* at whatever hour the time of his arrival be, *whether he shall come* early *in the second watch, or come* late *in the third watch* of the night[e] *and find* [*them*] *thus* employed, blessed and *happy are those* faithful *servants.*

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

But do not think it is enough, if you would then be happy, to make some sudden preparation upon notice of his coming; for the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night: and *you know this, that* there is none so negligent and stupid, where a house is plundered, but *if the house-keeper,* who is intrusted with the care of it, *had been aware at what hour the thief would have come, he would* undoubtedly *have watched* at that time, *and would not have permitted his house to be broke open:* he then that acts with prudence will be always on his watch, that, as he knows not when the thief will come, he may not find him unprepared. *Be you therefore also ready; for at such a season as you think not* of, and may least of all expect it, *the Son of man cometh;*[f] and as the day of final judgment

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

[d] *And* should *come forth* himself *and wait upon them.*] It is true (as Grotius and many others observe,) that the Roman masters did sometimes, during the Saturnalia, practise some condescensions like these to their slaves: but that was, perhaps; chiefly for their own diversion; and it is difficult to judge how far Christ's hearers might be acquainted with it; at least the words would be very intelligible without supposing any such reference.

[e] *In the second or third watch* of the night.] This included all the time from nine in the evening to three in the morning; and was, as if he had said, whether he come early or late.

[f] *At such a season as you think not, the Son of man cometh.*] The *coming of the Son of man* often signifies his providential interposition for the destruction of Jerusalem; (see Mat. x. 23, note[g], Vol. I. p. 415.) But here I think it cannot be taken in such a sense, because our Lord speaks of an immediate reward to be bestowed on all faithful servants, and an immediate punishment to be executed on all that were unfaithful; and expressly declares this to be a matter of universal concern: all which particulars have very little sense or propriety when applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. It must therefore be understood of his coming to

SECT. CXIV. Luke XII. 40.

will be a surprise to the world in general, so the day when particular persons are called out of this life is often a sudden thing, and too frequently a fatal surprise to the persons most intimately concerned in it. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 43, 44, sect. clxiii.)

41 *Peter then said unto him, Lord, dost thou speak this* awakening *parable*[g] *to us* thine apostles in particular? *or* is it *also unto all* in general, that what thou hast been saying is directed?

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 *And the Lord said* in reply, Though none are entirely unconcerned, yet you my ministers are more peculiarly to apply it to yourselves, and to consider me as asking each of you, *Who is that faithful and prudent steward,*[h] *whom* [*his*] *Lord shall set over* all *the servants of his family,*[i] *to deal out* to each of his domestics *the stated allowance of food in its* proper *season?* As the guilt of such an officer will be greater than that of a common servant, if he prove negligent; so the reward of his fidelity will be proportionably great. Peculiarly *happy is that servant* in so eminent a station, *whom his Lord at his arrival shall find thus employed* in a faithful discharge of the trust committed to him. *Truly I say to you, that he will* prefer him to a much higher station of honour and importance; as if a person finding his domestic steward thus faithful, should upon that *appoint him to take the care of all that he hath,* abroad as well as at home. (Compare Gen. xxxix. 4, 5, 6.)

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 *But,* on the contrary, *if that servant* I spoke

45 But and if that

remove them from the capacities of service here, to give up their account. And, if we suppose it to relate to death as well as judgment (which, by a consequence at least, it undoubtedly does), it strongly intimates his having such a dominion over the invisible world, that every soul removed into it might be said to be fetched away by him. Compare Rev. i. 18.

[g] *This* awakening *parable.*] It may signify particularly the similitude of *the Lord and his servants,* or may extend to the whole of the discourse.

[h] *Who is that faithful and prudent steward?*] This interrogation had a lively force to turn their thoughts inward, that each might ask himself *Whether he was the man?* The Prussian version therefore (and that English one which follows it so close) loses much of the spirit of the passage in rendering it, *If there be any faithful steward,* &c.—

[i] *The servants of his family.*] So I render Θεραπεια, which (as Elsner shews at large, Observ. Vol. I. p. 235) exactly answers to the Latin *famulitium, all the servants of a family;* for which we have no one English word, any more than for σιτομετριον, which strictly signifies a *determinate measure of wheat,* but here is put for *all the daily food;* (see Erasmus here.) By such a version the distinction between this and the 44th verse is set in a clearer light than critics have generally given it. To be raised from the care of giving out food to the servants, to have the charge of the whole estate, was a noble preferment.

servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken?

of before as set over the family,[k] should *say in his heart, My lord delays his coming* so that I have nothing to apprehend from it; *and* on that foolish presumption, *shall* grow so insolent and wanton, as to *begin to beat* and abuse *the men and maid-servants, and to eat and drink* in a riotous *and* extravagant manner, so as to *debauch [himself]* with it: I assure you, that *the Lord of that servant will come* upon him *in a day when he does not expect him, and in an hour which he is not aware of, and will* scourge him with such severity, that he will even *cut him asunder*;[l] *and*, notwithstanding the profession he has made, God *will appoint him his portion with the infidels*;[m] nay, in some respects, his case shall be worse than theirs, as his opportunities and engagements have been so much greater.

SECT. CXIV. Luke XII. 45

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

46

47 And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.

And that servant who, like him I have been speaking of, *knew his Lord's will* by a particular declaration of it,[n] *and*, disregarding the in-

47

[k] *If that servant* I spoke of before, &c.] It is necessary thus to go back to ver. 42 for the explication of this; for it is most evident, from the whole tenor of scripture, that the servant who at his Lord's coming has passed his account in an honourable manner, will never afterwards be in danger of incurring his displeasure.

[l] Scourge him with such severity, that he will even *cut him asunder*.] Dr. Whitby has so clearly proved *this* to be the sense of διχοτομήσει, that I am surprised that any should since have coldly rendered it, *shall separate him from the rest*. But this is one instance of many, in which the version of 1727 has followed the Prussian Testament in some of those parts of it which are the least judicious.—I know not on what authority it has been asserted that the word may only signify *confiscating his estate*. Wherever it, or any of its derivatives, occur in the Septuagint, it has always the signification which is here given it by our version, and generally answers to the Hebrew נתך. See Exod. xxix. 17; Lev. i. 8; Ezek. xxiv. 4. *Septuag.*

[m] *And appoint him his portion with infidels*.] It has been suggested to me by a person of great worth and eminence, that απιστων signifies *unfaithful*; and that had infidelity, or the disbelief of the gospel, been referred to here, the word would have been απιστοτατων. But I must beg leave to observe, that απιστοις does in several places evidently signify unbelieving: compare John xx. 27; 1 Cor. vii. 12—15, x. 27; xiv. 22—24 (where there is an express opposition in ver. 22 between απιστοις and πιστευουσι;) 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15; 1 Tim. v. 8. And I cannot but think that the spirit of this text is much better expressed by such a rendering; especially when the next verse is compared with it, which shews that, though this wicked servant shall have his portion and abode with such (who, by the way, had they not been unfaithful, would not have been unbelievers,) yet his punishment shall be more grievous; as there may be a great difference in the condition of criminals confined in the same prison.

[n] *Knew his Lord's will* by a particular declaration of it.] There is a force and propriety in these words beyond what is usually observed. A servant without express instruction, might know, that to beat his fellow-servants, and plunge himself into debauchery, would be offensive to his master; and he would therefore deserve some correction: but such a conduct in a servant, to whom his master had committed some particular charge, with suitable instructions for performing it, was most monstrous, and consequently deserved severer punishment.

SECT. CXIV. Luke XII. 47

structions given him, *did not keep himself ready*,[o] *nor* set himself to *do according to his will, shall* have the sorest punishment inflicted on him, and *be beaten with many* [*stripes.*][p] (Compare Deut. xxv. 2, 3.) *But he who* like the heathen, *did not know* the particulars of his duty by a clear revelation, *and* yet, sinning against that degree of light he had, *committed things which deserved stripes, shall be beaten* indeed, but *with fewer* and lighter [*strokes*[q]] than the other. *For* it is a received maxim among men, and God will make it the rule of his final judgment, that *much* improvement *shall be required from every one to whom much is given; and where much is deposited, the more will be demanded* in proportion to it. (Compare Numb. xv. 29, 30.)

pared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 35, 36

MAY our souls be awakened by these awful truths! and may we be engaged *to gird up the loins of our mind, to be sober, and* watch *to the end!* (1 Pet. i. 13.)

Great are our encouragements to *diligence* on the one hand; and, on the other, dreadful will be the punishment of our *neglect*.

[o] *Did not keep himself ready.*] So Mons. L'Enfant renders the word ἑτοιμασας, I suppose to distinguish it from the following clause; and I follow him, though not without some hesitation. Perhaps both may be joined thus, *Did not prepare or set himself to do according to his will.*—But since I wrote this, I perceive a great emphasis in these words, which I did not before observe. The sense rises on that of the foregoing verse; as if our Lord had said, "Think not that I merely intend to "forbid such gross immoralities as drunk-"enness, riot, oppression, &c. but be as-"sured, that sins of omission, where "there have been fair opportunities of "learning your duty, will expose you to "the Divine correction." The opposition here and in the next verse is between a servant who receives an express message from his master, which he contradicts; and another who, though he receive no such express message, yet falls into such instances of misbehaviour as he cannot but know to be inconsistent with his duty and office in general; by which he exposes himself justly to some punishment, though, other things being equal, he is less criminal than the former.

[p] *Shall be beaten with many stripes.*] *Scourging* was a usual *punishment* for negligent servants; but I cannot find that what is properly called giving the bastinado was in use among the Jews, though some suppose it to be referred to here.—Brennius thinks, that these words have a peculiar reference to the case of ministers, who have such singular advantages for knowing Christ's will; so that they will certainly be in the number of the most happy or the most miserable of mankind. May they seriously consider it, and rejoice with trembling in those distinctions of their office which will draw after them such solemn and weighty consequences!

[q] *Shall be beaten* indeed, but with *fewer strokes.*] This strongly intimates that ignorance will not entirely excuse any who have neglected God's service, since they might in general have known at least the main branches of their duty; as every servant may know in the main, what kind of conduct his master will approve, though some may be much more fully instructed than others as to his particular pleasure.

The time of *our Lord's appearance* is uncertain; let us therefore *always be ready;* solicitous that when he comes, he may *find us so doing*, as he has required; *living not to ourselves, but to him*, and employing ourselves about *that particular thing*, whatsoever it may be, which, all circumstances considered, we are verily persuaded may most promote the great ends of life, and the important purposes of his glory. SECT. CXIV. Ver. 40. 43

How glorious are the *rewards* promised to such! How justly may they awaken our emulation! He will *prefer them* to stations of more honourable and important service. He will *set them down at his table*, and *minister* (as it were) *himself* to their delight, bringing forth the choicest dainties of heaven, and spreading before them an eternal banquet. *Lord*, may we through thy grace, be found worthy to *taste of that supper!* May *the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne feed us, and guide us to fountains of living water!* (Rev. vii. 17.) 42, 44 37

On the other hand, let us seriously consider the *punishments* to be inflicted on the *unfaithful servant*. Let *ministers*, if such there are, who abandon themselves to a life of *idleness* and *luxury;* who stain their sacred character by *intemperance;* who proudly *censure their brethren*, and either call or wish, for *the secular arm* to *smite their fellow-servants*, perhaps more faithful than themselves; let such hear and tremble. Their *Lord* may *come* in a very *unexpected hour;* (as indeed, when do such expect him?) and what are *the stripes* they have given others, when compared with those which they shall themselves receive? *stripes* which shall *cut them asunder*, and pierce deep into their very souls! How much *more tolerable* will it be, even for the worst of *Gentile sinners*, than for such! 45 46

Let all who are in any measure distinguished by the gifts of the Divine bounty to them, or by their stations, whether in *civil* or *sacred offices*, attentively dwell on this great truth, so solemnly repeated again and again: let them consider it with a view to their own account: *To whomsoever much is given, of him will much be required.* May Divine Grace so impress it on their hearts, that they may be distinguished by present *fidelity*, and future *rewards*, in proportion to the difference which Providence has already made in their favour! And may they never have reason to reflect with confusion and anguish on what is now their honour and their joy! 48

SECT. CXV.

Christ observes the evils which would be occasioned by his coming, yet declares his desire to complete his work, and warns the Jews of the great danger of neglecting the short remainder of their time of trial. Luke XII. 49, *to the end.*

LUKE XII. 49.

SECT. CXV.

Luke XII. 49.

OUR Lord farther added in his discourse to his disciples and the multitude: After all that I have said to promote humanity and charity, yet it will in fact appear that *I am come to send fire on the earth;* so opposite is my doctrine to the prejudices and the lusts of men, and such are the violent contentions that my gospel will occasion, through the wickedness of those among whom it is preached: *and* yet *what do I wish?* that the gospel may be suppressed? nay, but I rather say, *Oh that* this fire, fierce as *it* shall be, *were already kindled*[a] by the universal propagation of a religion whose blessings so abundantly counterbalance all the accidental
50 evils which can attend it? *But I have* indeed, in the mean time, *a* most dreadful *baptism to be baptised with,* and know that I shall shortly be bathed, as it were, in blood, and plunged in the most overwhelming distress: *yet,* far from drawing back on that account, *how* inexpressibly *am I straitened* and uneasy through the earnestness of my desire, *till,* terrible as it is, *it be* fully *completed,*[b] and the glorious birth produced, whatever agonies may lie in the way to it!
51 But these benefits are to be secured in a very different manner from what some of you, my disciples, imagine: for *do you* now *suppose that*

LUKE XII. 49.

I AM come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that

[a] *And what do I wish? Oh that it were already kindled!*] I think Sir Norton Knatchbull has abundantly established this version. Dr. Whitby (who here, as in many other places, transcribes from Grotius) seems fully to have proved that τι sometimes has this force. Compare Luke xix. 42, and Numb. xxii. 29; Josh. vii. 7; Psal. lxxxi. 13. Septuag. (Perhaps we may add Luke xxii. 42.) See Grotius, in loc.

[b] *How am I straitened* and uneasy *till it be completed!*] The word συνεχομαι seems to import *an ardour of mind,* with which a person is so borne on towards the object of his affection and pursuit, that the necessary impediments which lie in his way are uneasy to him; compare 2 Cor. v. 14. —Mr. Locke understands it of a kind of embarrassment which Christ was under, to know how faithfully to fulfil his ministry, without giving such umbrage to the Roman power as would have drawn persecution and death upon him before the appointed time; (see Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 134:) but this seems to me a very foreign and unnatural sense.—That which I take it in, is also favoured by Luke xxii. 15, sect. 168: but if Grotius, whose sense I have hinted in the paraphrase, judge rightly of the particular force and beauty of the word συνεχομαι, it may be illustrated by John xvi. 21, sect. clxxviii.

SECT. CXV.

Luke XII. 51

I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.

I am come to give peace on the earth, or immediately to establish that temporal tranquillity and prosperity which you expect should attend the Messiah's kingdom?[c] *Nay, but*, considering how my gospel, notwithstanding all its tendency to peace, will be opposed, and how it will be perverted, *I* may *say to you*, that I am *rather* come to occasion the most unnatural *division*. *For* such are the contentious heats and animosities that will attend the publication of the gospel, that *ere long, five in one family shall be* so *divided*, that there shall be *three against two* on the one side, *and two against three* on the other: And this shall be the case when those families consist of persons in the nearest relations to each other: *the father*, for instance, *shall differ with the son, and the son with the father; the* fondest *mother with the daughter, and the daughter with the mother; the mother-in-law with her son's wife, and the daughter-in-law with her husband's mother*;[d] and so inveterate shall be their hatred against all that embrace my gospel, that they shall break the bands of nature, as well as of friendship, to express it. (Compare Mat. x. 34, 35, Vol. I. p. 419.)

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, Three against two, and two against three.

52

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother: the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in law.

53

54 And he said also to the people,

And he said also to the people, This perverseness already shews itself in your overlooking so many proofs of the Messiah's appearance among you, while you discover such a sagacity in your observations with respect to other things: for

54

[c] *Or immediately to establish that temporal tranquillity, &c.*] There are so many prophecies of the peaceful state of the Messiah's kingdom, (compare Psal. lxxii. 7; Isa. ii. 4; xi. 6—9; lxv. 25;) that it is hard to say how Christ could completely answer the character of the Messiah if he should never *give peace on earth*: but the error of the Jews lay in supposing he was *immediately* to accomplish it; whereas the prophecies of the New Testament, especially in the book of Revelation, shew, and those of the Old Testament most plainly intimate, that this prosperous state of his kingdom was not only to be preceded by his own sufferings, but by a variety of persecutions, trials, and sufferings, which would in different degrees attend his followers, before the kingdoms of the earth became, by a general conversion, the kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ; (Rev. xi. 15.) See Dr. Leland's Answer to the Moral Philosopher, p. 353—366.

[d] *The mother-in-law with her son's wife, and the daughter-in-law with her husband's mother.*] The original words, πενθερα, and νυμφη, are exactly expressed in this translation. The English words mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law, are more extensive, and rather, though not necessarily, lead us to think of [*noverca, μαλρυια*] a step-dame, or father's second wife, and her husband's daughter. Our Lord might mention this relation, because, in consequence of the obligation which the Jewish children were under to maintain their aged parents, a young man might, when he settled in the world, often take his mother, if a widow, into his family, and her abode in it might occasion less uneasiness than that of a mother-in-law in any other sense.

SECT. CXV.

when you see a cloud arising out of the west, or coming from the Mediterranean sea, *you presently say, a heavy shower is coming*;[e] *and it is so.*

Luke XII. 55 *And when [you find] the south-wind blowing* from the desert of Arabia, and other hot climates, *you say, There will be sultry heat; and* 56 so accordingly *it comes to pass. Ye hypocrites*, that pretend to ask for farther signs, as if you were really desirous to know whether I be or be not a Divine Teacher; *you know how* by such remarks as these *to distinguish the face of the earth and of the heavens*, so as to foretell the changes in the weather before they come; *but how is it that you do not discern* and judge of the much more evident signs of *this time*, which are attended with such manifest and unparalleled tokens of the Messiah's coming? (Compare 57 Mat. xvi. 2, 3, Vol. I. p. 478.) *Yea, why is it you do not even of yourselves judge what is* fit and *right*,[f] and gather from such obvious premises, how you ought in reason and conscience to treat so extraordinary a Person as I appear to be from the whole series of my doctrine and conduct, instead of disregarding all the proofs that shew me to be sent from God?

58 This, however you may thoughtlessly neglect it, is a matter of the utmost importance: I must therefore enforce the exhortation I formerly gave you; (Mat. v. 25, 26, Vol. I. p. 218,) and press you to endeavour, with the greatest diligence, that the controversy may immediately be made up between God and your souls. For you count it a rule of human prudence; *when you go to the magistrate with your adversary*, who has a suit against you, to *use your* utmost *endeavour to make up the affair with him*[g]

When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when *ye see* the south-wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth: but how is it that you do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered

[e] *A heavy shower is coming.*] Ομβρος properly signifies *a heavy shower*; and καυσων, in the next verse, *sultry* or *scorching heat.*

[f] *Why is it you do not even of yourselves*, &c.] The phrase αφ' ἑαυτων does not seem here to signify, "From the like "principles of good sense which you use "in common affairs, or in matters rela-"ting to yourselves;" but it seems an advance on that thought, as if our Lord had said, "Even though I had not so "expressly drawn the consequence, yet, "from the tenor of my doctrine and "character, as well as from my mira-"cles, you might have discerned your-"selves, that it must be a very wrong "and very dangerous thing to reject and "slight me."—Castalio and Grotius connect this verse with the two following, I think without any reason.

[g] *Use your* utmost *endeavour to make up the affair with him.*] Theophylact intimates, and Salmasius, and after him

from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence till thou hast paid the very last mite.

while you are yet *on the way; lest he force thee before the judge, and the judge* having found thee to be indeed accountable, *deliver thee to the* custody of the *serjeant, and the serjeant throw thee into prison.* It will not then be in thy power to compound the matter upon gentler terms, or to get free from thy confinement; but *I tell thee* that, when he has thee at such an advantage, *thou shalt not* be able to *come out from thence till thou hast paid the very last mite* of the debt thou owest.[h] And thus if you are regardless of the proposals of God's mercy while the day of life and grace is continued, nothing is to be expected from the tribunal of his justice, but a severe sentence, which will end in everlasting confinement and punishment.

SECT. CXV. Luke XII. 58. 59.

IMPROVEMENT.

To what a lamentable degree is human nature corrupted, that so noble a remedy as the gospel, so well adapted to the cure of a malevolent and contentious disposition, should in so many instances only irritate the disease! and that a scheme so full of love and goodness, and so well suited to promote peace and harmony in those who cordially embrace it, should be opposed with all the violence of persecution; and be the means of introducing strife and division! Ver. 49.

How monstrous is it, that any should *hate their neighbours,* yea, and their nearest *relatives,* for that disinterested piety, and regard to conscience, which might recommend *strangers* to their esteem and affection! Yet let not those who meet with such injurious treatment be discouraged; knowing they have a *Father* and a *Saviour* in heaven, whose love is ten thousand times more than all: nor let others be offended, as if Christianity had been the occasion of more *evil* than *good;* for such is the nature of 51, 53

La Cene, largely insist upon it, that δος τεγαριαν signifies, "*Pay the interest,* as "well as the principal of thy debt, in "order to procure *deliverance.*" But Luke makes use of another word [τοκος] for *usury,* (Luke xix. 23.) which I think a considerable argument for the common rendering, which is also more extensive.—Απηλλαχθαι signifies, not merely any kind of deliverance, but such an agreement as secures the defendant from any farther danger of prosecution; as Elsner accurately shews, Observ. Vol I. p. 257.—It is well known, that αντιδικος properly signifies *a prosecutor,* or one who has a suit at law against another, whether in a civil or criminal case.

[h] *The very last mite* of the debt thou owest.] The *mite* [λεπτον,] was the least valuable of their coins, (see Mark xii. 42.) containing no more than half of their least kind of farthing, or of their κοδραντης, or quadrans; which was itself but the fourth part of the as, or ασσαριον, or of the larger farthing, mentioned Mat. x. 29. and Luke xii. 6; so that the mite was but little more than the third part of an English farthing, and a sparrow was reckoned worth four of them.

SECT. CXV. eternity, that the salvation of one immortal soul will be more than an equivalent for the greatest and most lasting temporal evils which the greatest number of persons can suffer for conscience sake.

Ver. 50 Let this awaken our *zeal to save souls*, however great and terrible the sufferings are to which it may expose us, in proportion to the *rage* with which the enemy is endeavouring their *destruction*. May we be animated in it by the example of the blessed *Jesus*, who, with a view to this, even *longed for those sufferings* which innocent nature could not but regard as the object of strong aversion!

54, 56 May we at all times be so wise as to *discern* the evidences, and to comply with the purposes of the *gospel*, else our *knowledge in natural things*, should it extend not only to the most common, but the most curious *appearances* on the *face of the earth* or *the heavens*, will turn to no other account but to shame, and condemn us?

58 If we have any reason to fear that, through obstinate impenitence, the blessed *God* is still an *adversary* to us, let us make it our first and greatest care that, by an humble submission of soul to him in the methods of his *gospel grace*, that strict scrutiny of his justice may be prevented, and that sentence of his wrath averted, which would otherwise plunge us into *endless ruin and misery*; for when could we pretend to have *paid the last farthing* of the debt of *ten thousand talents*, which we have been daily contracting, and which is charged to our account in the *book of his remembrance!*

SECT. CXVI.

Christ, on the mention of some calamities which had befallen others, warns his hearers of the danger they were in if they did not repent, and illustrates it by the parable of the barren fig-tree. Luke XIII. 1—9.

LUKE XIII. 1.

LUKE XIII. 1. THERE were present at that season, some that told him of the Galileans,

NOW, while our Lord was thus discoursing of the necessity of being at peace with God, *some who were present at that time, told him of those* unhappy *Galileans*, the followers of Judas Gaulonites,[a] who had rendered themselves ob-

[a] *Told him of these Galileons*, the followers of Judas Gaulonites.] Josephus has given us the story of this Judas Gaulonites at large, Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1. § 1. (See also Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 8. (al. 7,) § 1; cap. 17. § 8; and lib. vii. cap. 8, (al. 28.) Havercamp.) It appears he was at the head of a sect who asserted

SECT. CXVI.

Luke XIII. 1

whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

noxious to the Roman power by some acts or principles of resistance to it; and *whose blood Pilate* the governor *had* in effect *mingled with their sacrifices*, having circumvented and slain them when they were come to worship in the temple at a public feast.

2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

And Jesus, without making any remarks on 2 the cause on which they were engaged, endeavoured, with his usual wisdom and piety, to lead the minds of his hearers into some profitable reflections upon the event; and, *in reply, said to them, Do you think that these Galileans were* notorious *sinners above all* the rest of *the Galileans, that they suffered such* sad *things* as these, and were cut off in so miserable a manner?

3 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

If 3 you do, you are very unfit to judge of the conduct of Providence; for, howsoever you may censure them, as shewn hereby to be the most enormous sinners, *I tell you, No;* you are not to conclude from hence this was the case; *but, except you repent, you shall all perish thus;* [b] vengeance will overtake you in your evil ways, and, in the desolating judgments that will shortly come on your whole nation, the blood of many of you shall be mingled with your sacrifices.

4 Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think

Or, to instance in another unhappy case that 4 has lately occurred, I mean that of *those eighteen men on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and*

God to be their only Sovereign, and were so utterly averse to a submission to the Roman power, that they accounted it unlawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar, and rather would endure the greatest torments than give any man the title of lord. This Judas is probably the person whom Gamaliel refers to by the name of Judas of Galilee, Acts v. 37.—Josephus does not mention the slaughter of these Galileans (which, by the way, makes Zegerus's interpretation very improbable that they were actually slain at the altar in contempt of the temple;) but he records an action of Pilate that much resembles it, of the manner of his treating the Samaritans; Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 4 (al. 5,) § 1.—Perhaps this story of the Galileans might now be mentioned to Christ with a design of leading him into a snare, whether he should justify or condemn the persons that were slain.

[b] *You shall all perish thus, ωσαυτως απολεισθε.*] Some content themselves with rendering it, *You shall all perish as well as they;* and possibly no more may be intended: yet the rendering I prefer appears to be more literal; and I the rather choose it, because (as Grotius, Tillotson, Whitby, and many others have observed,) there was a remarkable resemblance between the fate of these Galileans and that of the whole Jewish nation; the flower of which was slain at Jerusalem by the Roman sword while they were assembled at one of their great festivals; (see Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 17,) § 3, 4;) and many thousands of them perished in the temple itself, and were (as their own historian represents it at large,) literally buried under its ruins. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 4, (al. vii. 10,) § 6, & cap. 5, (al. vii. 11,) § 1, 2.

SECT. CXVI. Luke XIII. 5

slew them,[c] *do you think they were greater offenders than all the* other *inhabitants of Jerusalem,* that they were thus providentially singled out for destruction? *I tell you, No;* you would judge very rashly if you were in general to draw such conclusions; for the best of men may be involved with others in temporal calamities; *but* remember what I told you before, that, *except you repent, you shall all perish thus;* you shall be pressed under the insupportable load of the divine vengeance, and be destroyed under the ruins of that holy city in which you trust.

ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 *And,* in order to awaken them more effectually to such deep and serious repentance, *he spake this parable* to them; There was *a certain man* who *had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came,* for several successive seasons, *searching* 7 *for fruit upon it, but he found none. And* at length, despairing of any better success, *he said to the keeper of the vineyard, Behold, these three years* together[d] *I* have *come to look for fruit upon this fig-tree, and* still *I find none; cut it down* therefore immediately, as a barren tree: for *why does it* thus *cumber the ground,* filling up the place of more profitable plants with its useless bulk, and drawing away nourishment from those 8 that grow round it? *But* such was the concern of the vine-dresser for its preservation, that *he said to him in reply, Sir,* I desire thou wouldst *let it alone this year also, till I shall dig* up the

6 He spake also this parable: A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall

[c] *On whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them.*] From the fountain of Siloam, which was without the walls of Jerusalem, a little stream flowed into the city, (Isa. viii. 6.) which was received into a kind of bason, which some have thought to be the same with the pool of Bethesda; see 2 Kings xx. 20; Neh. iii. 16; Isa. viii. 6; and John v. 2; ix. 7.) Being near the temple, it is no wonder that many frequented it for purification; but the calamity occasioned by the fall of the neighbouring tower is not, that I can find, mentioned any where but here; probably it had happened at some late feast; and some of Christ's hearers might then have been at Jerusalem.—Erasmus indeed takes this Siloam to have been Shiloh, the place where the tabernacle was first settled, (Josh. xviii. 1; Psal. xxviii. 60;) but without sufficient reason; see Drusius in loc.—This last instance might seem in some respects more to the purpose than the former, as there was no human interposition attending the death of these men; so that it seemed more immediately providential than that of the Galileans whom Pilate had massacred.

[d] *These three years.*] Many have supposed that these words allude to the time of Christ's personal ministry, which, as most have computed the chronology of the New Testament, had now lasted three years: but it is certain, the patience of God bore with them much longer than another year. Grotius therefore thinks it more probable it may refer to the nature of a fig-tree, which if it bear at all, generally begins to do it, within three years after it is planted; but might to be sure be looked upon as barren, if it had disappointed the expectation of the planter three years together after the time in which it should have yielded fruit, which was yet worse.

dig about it, and dung *it:*
9 And if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

ground *about it, and lay dung to* the root of *it:* SECT. CXVI.
And then *perhaps it may bear fruit,*[e] and if so, it is well, and thou preservest thy tree; *but if not, after this thou shalt,* if thou pleasest, *cut it down,* and I will say nothing farther to prevent it. By which parable our Lord did plainly represent to the Jews the Divine displeasure against them for having neglected the many opportunities they had enjoyed as planted in the vineyard of God's church, (compare Isa. v. 1, 2; xxvii. 2, 3;) and in an awful manner intimated, that though they had hitherto, at his intercession been spared, yet, if they continued unfruitful under the additional cultivation they were shortly to receive on the descent of the Spirit, and the proposal of the gospel in its full extent and evidence,[f] they must expect nothing but speedy, irresistible, and irrecoverable ruin. Luke XIII. 9

IMPROVEMENT.

WHICH of us may not learn a lesson for himself from this instructive *parable* of the *fig-tree?* Have we not long been *planted in God's vineyard,* and favoured with the cultivation of his ordinances, yea, with the dews of his grace too; and yet how little *fruit* have we borne in proportion to those advantages? How long has he *come seeking it* in vain, while we have frustrated the most reasonable expectations, perhaps not only for *three,* but several of us for more than *thirty years?* Wonderful is it that the dreadful *sentence* has not long since gone forth against us, *Cut them down, why cumber they the ground?* We owe it to the *intercession* of our blessed *Redeemer,* the Great *Keeper* of the *garden of God,* that this has not long since been our case. *Let us not be high-minded, but fear!* (Rom. xi. 20.) Let *barren sinners* reflect that this may be *the last year,* perhaps indeed the *last month,* or *last day* of their trial; for even now also *the axe laid at the root of the tree!* (Mat. iii. 10.) And let them remember, that though *there be hope of a tree, when it is cut down, that it may sprout again,* (Job xiv. 7.) yet, when the Ver. 6. 7 8 9

[e] *Perhaps it may bear fruit:* κ'αν μεν ποιηση καρπον.] It is in the original something of an abrupt way of speaking, of which Raphelius has produced many examples; (Annot. ex. Xen. p. 102, 103;) but I think the way of rendering the idiom I have here used, would suit it in most of those instances.

[f] Under the additional cultivation, &c.] The extraordinary means used to bring them to repentance after the resurrection of Christ, by the effusion of his Spirit, and the preaching of the apostles, might, with great propriety, be expressed by digging round the barren tree, and applying warm compost or dung to its roots.

SECT. CXVII. Ver. 2. doom is executed on them, *their root will be as rottenness, and their blossom will go up like dust*; (Isaiah v. 24.) and *every tree which brings not forth good fruit* will be *hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

Let such therefore meditate *terror* when *the judgments of God are abroad in the earth*; and, when others are overwhelmed in ruin, let them not harshly censure the sufferers, as if they 3, 5 were *greater sinners than any others*; but let them apply that salutary, though awful, *admonition* to their own souls, repeating it again and again, till they are *pricked to the heart* by it, *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

Terrible indeed was the case of those *whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices*, and of those who were dashed to 4 pieces in a moment by the *fall of Siloam's tower*: but infinitely more dreadful will be the condition of them that *fall into the hands of the living God*, (Heb. x. 31.) especially of those deceivers who, having surrounded his altars with the hypocritical forms of devotion, shall themselves be made the victims of his justice, and be crushed by the resistless weight of his almighty vengeance.

SECT. CXVII.

Christ cures a crooked woman in the synagogue, and vindicates his doing it on the sabbath-day; and afterwards repeats the parables of the grain of mustard seed, and of the leaven. Luke XIII. 10—22.

LUKE XIII. 10.

SECT. CXVII. Luke XIII. 10. THUS our Lord went on in his journey through Galilee for a considerable time; *and as he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath-day,* 11 *Behold there was* presented *a* poor disabled *woman, who* (as the Jews used commonly to express it, and was now actually the case) *had* been afflicted by *a spirit of weakness*[a] no less than *eighteen years, and was bowed together* in *so* sad a manner *that* from

LUKE XIII. 10. AND he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together and could

[a] *Had* been afflicted by *a spirit of weakness.*] It is very evident the Jews apprehended that all remarkable disorders of body proceeded from the operation of some malignant demon. Perhaps they might draw an argument from what is said of Satan's agency in the affliction of Job, (chap. i. and ii.) and from Psal. xci. 6. (compare eptuag.) and 1 Sam. xvi. 14. They also considered Satan as having *the power of Death,* Heb. ii. 14.—And that, in some maladies, this was indeed the case, is intimated by our Lord's reply here, ver. 16, and by St. Paul's words, 1 Cor. v. 5, where he speaks of delivering an offender to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.—The topic is very judiciously handled by that illustrious writer Mr. Howe; (see his works, Vol. II. p. 360, 361;) and there are some curious and entertaining remarks in Wolfius on this text.

SECT. CXVII

Luke XIII. 12

in no wise lift up *herself.*

the time it first seized her, *she was utterly unable to raise herself upright,*[b] or to stand straight.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her* to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

And Jesus seeing her, and intimately knowing all the sad circumstances of her affliction, and the difficulty with which she was then come to attend the solemnities of Divine worship there, *called her to him, and said to her, Woman, thou art loosed from* that affliction which thou hast long been under by reason of *thy weakness* and malady.

13 And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

And, as he was speaking these words, *he laid his hands upon her, and immediately she was* strengthened, and *made straight;* so that she stood before them all in an erect posture, and moved with as much ease and freedom as if she had never been disabled: *and*, as was most reasonable, *she* in a very affectionate manner *glorified God* before the whole assembly; praising him for so signal and unexpected a favour, and declaring how long her illness had continued, and how desperate and incurable it was thought.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath-day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day.

But, a ruler of the synagogue,[c] instead of joining in acknowledgments of the Divine power and goodness displayed in that gracious action of our Lord, was *moved with indignation*, which he endavoured to disguise under the form of piety and zeal; and, as if he only had been angry *because Jesus had healed* her *on the sabbath-day*, he *answered and said unto the people, There are six days on which* the common *work* of human life *must be done; on* some of *these therefore* you may surely find time to *come and be healed, and* should *not* make these applications *on the sabbath-day*, which you know is appropriated to the sacred purposes of religious rest and worship.

[b] *Utterly unable to raise herself upright.*] This version of μη δυναμενη ανακυψαι εις το παντελες seems preferable to that other, which the words εις το παντελες might bear; "*She could not lift herself up, so as to stand "perfectly straight.*" (Compare Heb. vii. 25. Gr.) For on the rendering I have given, which is equally literal, the miracle appears much more important than on the other.

[c] *A ruler of the synagogue.*] It is plain that there were several rulers of the same synagogue. (Compare Mark v. 22; Acts xiii. 15; xviii 8. 17.) And Dr. Lightfoot and Vitringa have observed that, in every town where there was a synagogue, there were at least ten men who were obliged constantly to attend on the public worship in it. Of these, *three* were called *rulers*, who presided in directing the worship, and judged of such little disputes and litigations as might be determined in the synagogue; but not without a reserve of appeal to the several superior courts. If of these three there was any one who had a distinguished authority, and might by way of eminence be called *the ruler of the synagogue*, it is strange the Jewish writers omit to mention it, which, so far as I can recollect, they never do; see Wolfius on this text, and Vitringa, Synag. Vet. p. 585.

SECT. CXVI. Luke XIII. 15

Then the Lord answered him with a just severity, *and said, Thou hypocrite*, who thus makest thy pretended zeal for the honour of Divine institutions a specious cloak for thy malice against me, art thou not self-condemned? *Does not every one of you*, even the Pharisees and rulers of synagogues among the rest,[d] without any scruple or blame, *loose his ox or his ass from the manger, and lead him away to drink on the sabbath-day*, as well as on any other: though the work be more servile than what I have done, and the occasion far less important?

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall and lead *him* away to watering?

16 *Now*, if you have such a regard to the thirst of one of your cattle, *was it not* much more apparently *fit, that this* good *woman, who is a* believing *daughter of Abraham, whom Satan*, by the Divine permission *has bound* in this cruel manner, *lo*, for *these eighteen years* together, *should be loosed from this bond* even *on the sabbath-day*, especially when it might be effected without any labour, by no more than a word and a touch?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound lo these eighteen years be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day?

17 *And when he had said these things, all his opposers were ashamed*, and perfectly confounded by the strength of such obvious and conclusive reasoning: *and all the multitude* who were present *rejoiced* in his triumph; *for* they were greatly delighted with *all the* wonderful and *glorious things that were done by him*, in which there was so amiable a display of his goodness as well as his power.

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 Now on this occasion, for the farther encouragement of his friends, and confusion of his enemies, our Lord thought proper to intimate the great increase of his kingdom, notwithstanding the malignant opposition it should meet with, which he illustrated by two parables formerly

18 Then said he,

[d] Even the Pharisees and rulers of synagogues among the rest.] Had not this been generally the case, the answer would not have been sufficient for conviction in the present circumstance. Perhaps this ruler might that very day have been performing such an office for one of his cattle with his own hands: I say *with his own hands*; for it was by no means essential to his being a ruler of the synagogue that he should be a person of wealth or dignity in common life; though probably, in large and splendid cities (such for instance, as Capernaum was), such persons might generally be chosen. —Critics have collected passages from rabbinical writers, in which they allow it to be lawful to feed or water a beast on the sabbath-day. See Lightfoot Hor. Hebr. on this text; where he shews they were expressly allowed even to draw water for their beasts; a much more laborious work than leading them to it. See also Wotton's Miscell. Vol. II. p. 41—46.

Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden, and it grew, and waxed a great tree: and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

delivered elsewhere: *and he said, To what is the kingdom of God like, and what shall I compare it to?* or how is it that I shall represent the propagation of the gospel in the world? *It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his garden; and* from so minute a seed *it grew* to a prodigious bulk, *and became such a great tree, that the birds of the air* came and *lodged in its branches.* So shall my kingdom, which in its first beginning seems to be contemptible, diffuse itself in time over the whole world, and the inhabitants of distant nations shall seek their shelter in it. (Compare Mat. xiii. 31, 32, and Mark iv. 30—32, Vol. I. p. 370, 371.)

SECT. CXVII. Luke XIII. 18, 19

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

And again he said, To what else *shall I liken the kingdom of God*, of which I have now been speaking? or how shall I describe the efficacy of its doctrine? *It is like* a little quantity of *leaven, which a woman took and covered up in* a mass of dough, consisting of no less than *three measures of meal;* and yet it insinuated and diffused itself throughout *till the whole* lump *was leavened.* So shall the gospel make its way, and, by a secret influence, shall spread its efficacy through the hearts of men, till it has changed them into a likeness to itself. (Compare Mat. xiii. 33, Vol. I. p. 371.)

20 21

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem.

And thus *he went through* all *the* principal *cities and villages* of Galilee, *teaching* them wheresoever he came, *and travelling on toward Jerusalem;* to which he had now begun to steer his course, as he intended to be there at the approaching feast of the dedication, (John x. 22, sect. CXXXIV.) and to spend the little remainder of his time during his continuance upon earth in that city, or the neighbouring parts; no more returning to these northern regions till he appeared here after his resurrection.

22

IMPROVEMENT.

AGAIN do we see, in a very instructive instance, the power and goodness of *Christ.* It wrought on a poor despised creature; but *our Lord* considered her as *a daughter of Abraham,* and honoured, even in her, whatever traces of her father *Abraham*'s faith and piety his penetrating eye might discern. Her

verse 15 16

SECT. CXVII. Ver. 11. zeal and willingness to attend on public worship brought her out, though she *could not stand upright*, and had probably in that respect a much better excuse for staying at home than many could make who now often absent themselves from the much nobler services of the *Christian* sanctuary.

10, 13 She met with *Christ* in the *synagogue*, and returned with a *cure*. And oh, how many, as the effect of such a pious zeal, though they have not been *loosed from their infirmities*, have at least been greatly strengthened to bear them.

16 *Our Lord* says, that *Satan had bound her*. That malignant enemy to our bodies and souls rejoices in any opportunity of hurting either. But it is pleasing to think, that his power is always under the controul of *Christ*; and therefore shall never be exercised on his people any farther than their gracious *Redeemer* sees it consistent with their good, and will take care to render it subservient to it.

14 How gravely does this *ruler of the synagogue* instruct the people in a point of ceremony, while his heart was full of enmity to *Christ*, and hardened against every sentiment of human compassion! Justly was his *hypocrisy* confounded and exposed.

15 We should with pleasure see this *Sun of Righteousness* thus victoriously breaking through those clouds which envy and malice had raised to obscure him, and diffusing his sacred light from one end of the heavens to the other. With pleasure should

18, 21 we view the accomplishment of these *parables* which represent the success of *his gospel* as so great; and we should daily pray, with increasing earnestness, that all the remaining nations and *kingdoms of this world* may at length *become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ*; and sincere converts flock to him from every side, even *as doves to their windows!* (Rev. xi. 15, and Isa. lx. 8.)

SECT. CXVIII.

Christ warns his hearers of the difficulty and importance of entering into the kingdom of heaven; and is not intimidated by the fear of Herod from pursuing his work. Luke XIII. 23, *to the end.*

LUKE XIII. 23.

AND, as Jesus was proceeding in his journey towards Jerusalem, where he designed to be present at the feast of the dedication,[a] being

LUKE XIII. 23.

THEN said one un-

[a] Where he designed to be present at the feast of the dedication.] Mr. Whiston and some others place the following passages in a different order, and introduce them after this feast: but it does not appear that Christ was ever in Galilee

to him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

attended by several of his disciples, in a pretty large compass which he took by the way, *one* of them *said to him, Lord, are there* [*but*] *few that shall be saved?* Surely, if thy kingdom be so extensive as these parables intimate, (see ver. 19, 21.) the number must be very considerable. SECT. CXVIII. Luke XIII. 23

But he said to them, Instead of amusing yourselves with such curious inquiries with relation to others, attend to what more nearly concerns you, and be solicitous to secure your own safety: And let me urge it upon you, that you *exert your utmost strength to enter in at the strait gate,*[b] which I formerly mentioned as leading to eternal life, (Mat. vii. 14, Vol. I. p. 246). and strain, as it were, every nerve to break your way through those enemies who are always ready to oppose your passage: *for I* seriously *tell you,* the time is coming, when *many will* importunately *seek to enter in,*[c] *and shall not be able* to do it.

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

And, howsoever they may now despise and trifle with the means of grace, this will hereafter be the case, even with the most stupid and negligent of mankind, *as soon as ever the* great Lord and *Master of the family shall,* as it were, *have risen up* from his seat, *and* with his own authoritative hand *shall have shut* and barred *the door;*[d] *and you,* among the rest, *shall begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying,* with great earnestness, *Lord, Lord,* we beseech thee, *open to us:* but you will cry in vain, *and he* who now so graciously invites and

25 When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and

before his resurrection, after this journey. He was indeed at Ephraim, or Ephrem, (John xi. 54. sect. cxli;) but, as that city lay on the confines of the tribe of Benjamin, at no great distance from Jerusalem, (Lightfoot's Disquisit. Chorogr. in Joan. cap. vii. § 1.) the argument which Mr. Whiston draws from thence in favour of his order must be very inconclusive. See Whiston's Harmony, p. 385 and 403.

[b] *Exert your utmost strength to enter in at the strait gate.*] The original word ἀγωνίζεσθε fully expresses this. It imports the act of *contending* in the most ardent and resolute manner *with antagonists* in games, or in war; and may well intimate, that the *strait gate* is beset with a variety of *enemies,* through which, if we aspire to a crown of eternal glory, we must *break* and *force our way:* a representation equally just and awakening! Compare 1 Cor. ix. 25; Col. i. 29; 1 Tim. vi. 12; and 2 Tim. iv. 7.

[c] *Many will seek to enter in.*] The Prussian version renders it, *shall try,* or *attempt:* but I apprehend from the context, that it refers to importunate entreaties when they were actually excluded, rather than to feeble attempts now; though it is an awful truth, that these likewise will be unsuccessful.

[d] *The master of the family,* &c.] There is a majesty and pathos in this passage, as in many others, which no paraphrase can retain, in which the very words of our Lord do not make a part.

SECT. CXVIII. Luke xiii. 25

waits upon you, *shall* then *reply to you, I know you not*, who you are, or from *whence you are* come; but determine to treat you as strangers, for whom I have no friendship or regard, and who have never been approved by me.

he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are:

26 Some of you may perhaps *then* plead an intimate acquaintance and professed friendship, and urge the privileges that you once enjoyed, and the conspicuous figure you made in his church: but if any of you can carry it so far as that *you shall begin to say*, Lord *we have eaten and drank in thy presence*[c] in a familiar manner, *and thou hast* thyself lived among us, and often *taught in our streets* and houses, so that thou

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 canst not sure have forgot us: *Nevertheless, he will* persist in disowning you, and *say, I tell you* again, *I know you not*, and whatsoever you pretend to, I regard not *whence you are;* all the former relation to which you refer is, (as it were) blotted from my remembrance, since your hearts were still insincere, and your lives unsuitable to your fair professions; and therefore *depart from me, all ye that* habitually *practise iniquity*; for none of your character shall ever be admitted here. (Compare Mat. vii. 22, 23. Vol. I. p. 249, 250.)

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are: depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.

28 This awful word, how little soever you may now regard it, shall wound you to the heart, and throw you into agonies of everlasting despair: and *there shall be* the bitterest *weeping and gnashing of* the *teeth* for madness and rage, *when you shall see* your holy ancestors, *Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets* of the succeeding ages, *in* actual possession of *the kingdom of God; and* shall find *yourselves cast out* with contempt, and thrust back with just indig-

29 nation. *Yea, they shall come* from the most distant heathen lands, even *from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall*

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south,

[c] *We have eaten and drank in thy presence.*] Perhaps some of the nine thousand whom he had fed by miracle may at last be in this miserable number. (Compare John vi. 26.)—Brennius refers it to their having eaten the sacrifices presented to God according to the Mosaic constitution.—But different persons may use this plea in different senses; and they who, while their hearts were hardened in impenitence and unbelief, have profaned the Lord's supper by an unworthy participation of it, will find a sad sense peculiar to themselves, though it might not be chiefly intended.

and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

sit down in joyful multitudes, to partake of the heavenly banquet with your pious ancestors *in the kingdom of God*, while you are utterly excluded from it. (Compare Mat. viii. 11, 12, and note,[f] Vol. I. p. 309.) SECT. CXVIII. Luke XIII. 29

30 And, behold there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

And, behold, this shall be the case, not only of a few, but of great numbers; for *there are* many who are now *last* in point of religious advantages, *that shall* then *be first* in honour and happiness; *and there are* many who now appear *first*, *that shall* then *be* found *last*; and, on account of their abused privileges, shall appear as the most infamous and miserable of mankind. (Compare Mat. xix. 30, and Mark x. 31, sect. cxxxvii.)

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

These things our Lord said in his journey through Galilee towards Jerusalem; making many pauses in his way, that, in consequence of the shortness of his stages, he might have an opportunity of greater usefulness. And it came to pass *on that day*, when he uttered these discourses, *some* of the *Pharisees came*, *and* that they might, if possible, intimidate and drive him to a distance, they *said to him*, *Go forth*, *and depart from hence*, with all possible speed, into the territories of some other prince, *for Herod* the tetrarch, in whose dominions thou art, *is* at this very time *determined to kill thee*,[f] as he did John the Baptist, thy friend and associate, and seeks but an opportunity to effect it. 31

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

But Jesus was so far from being at all alarmed at this intimation, that *he said to them* with great steadiness, *Go*, *and tell that fox*, that crafty, wicked, and voracious prince, *Behold*, *I cast out demons*, *and perform cures* in thy dominions *to-day and to-morrow*, and carry on my work a little while longer, *and the third day I* 32

[f] *Herod is determined to kill thee;* θελει αποκτειναι.] For the force of this phrase compare note[b] on John vii. 17, sect. xcix. and note[a] on John i. 43, Vol. I. p. 131.—It is very probable, considering both the wicked character and suspicious temper of Herod, that, though he had a curiosity to see Christ, (compare Luke ix. 9. xxiii. 8.) he was uneasy at his spending so much time in Galilee, lest he should occasion him some embarrassment either with regard to the Jews or the Romans; yet fearing, after all the anxiety which the murder of John the Baptist had given him, to make any attempt on his life, he might think fit thus to endeavour to terrify him with an empty threatening. In this view there would be a peculiar propriety in calling him fox, rather than lion, wolf, or bear; to which savage beasts the prophets had sometimes, with a plainness becoming their character, compared wicked princes. Compare Zephaniah iii. 3; Ezekiel xxii. 27; and Prov. xvii. 12.

SECT. CXVIII. Luke XIII. 33

shall be perfected;[g] for the appointed time will quickly come when I shall finish my course, and have done all that I intend here. In the mean while he may well allow me a license to stay in his territories so long, at least on such kind and gracious designs: or howsoever he may be unwilling to allow it, yet, *nevertheless I must go on* in this leisurely progress (as I just now said,) *to-day, and to-morrow, and the third day*, till the determined season comes in which my ministry shall be fulfilled: nor do I fear the effects of Herod's malice; *for it cannot be supposed that a prophet should perish*, or be put to death, any where *out of Jerusalem*;[h] that unhappy city, the seat of the supreme court, challenging, as it were, to itself the sad prerogative of being the slaughter-house of the messengers of God.

33 Nevertheless I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 And upon this, turning, in thought at least, towards Jerusalem, though it lay at the distance of so many miles, he took up a most affectionate lamentation over it, and said, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, thou guilty and miserable city! *who*, though thou hast been distinguished by divine favours beyond any place on earth, yet, with the utmost ingratitude and cruelty, *slayest the prophets, and stonest*, as the vilest malefactors, *those who are sent unto thee* as the ambassadors of God! *How often would I have gathered thy children together* unto myself, with all the tenderness of parental love, and have sheltered, comforted, and cherished them, even *as a hen* [*gathers*] *her little brood* of chickens *under her wings? yet you* were still regardless of the offers of my grace, and *would not* be persuaded to hearken to my call,

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!

[g] *And the third day I shall be perfected.*] Many suppose, and I think very reasonably, that our Lord is not to be understood as speaking exactly of *three days*, but of a *little period* of time: see Hos. vi. 2; and compare the original of Gen xxxi. 2; Exod. iv. 10; Deut. xix. 4; Josh. iii. 4; 1 Sam. xix. 7; and 1 Chron. xi 2: in all which places, *yesterday and the third day* signifies *lately*, or *a little while ago*.—On this interpretation the word τελειωμαι, *I shall be perfected*, may refer to Christ's finishing the work of redemption, and being by death consecrated to his office as the great High-Priest and Captain of our Salvation; as the word is used Heb. ii. 10; v. 8, 9, 10; vii. 27, 28.

[h] *It cannot be supposed that a prophet, &c.*] John the Baptist had lately perished in Galilee; so that the expression εκτος ενδεχεται can import no more than this version expresses, which Elsner has shewn to be its proper sense; (Elsner Observ. Vol. I. p. 242.)—Drusius, Grotius, Knatchbull, and many other eminent critics refer this to the right which the sanhedrim alone had to punish a person as a false prophet.

35 Behold your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

and to accept my favour. And now, alas, *behold* with awful dread, and remark the prediction and event, *your house is left unto you desolate:* and the hour is just at hand, when your children whom I would have gathered to myself, shall perish, and your temple shall be utterly destroyed: *and*, in the mean time, *I assuredly say unto you*, That I will quickly cease my labours among you, and retire in such righteous displeasure, *that you shall see me no more, till the time come when*, taught by your calamities, *you shall* be ready and disposed to *say*, *Blessed* [*be*] *he that cometh in the name of the Lord*,[1] and shall in vain wish for the succour of him whom you now despise. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 37—39, sect. clviii.)

SECT. CXVIII. Luke XIII. 35.

IMPROVEMENT.

AND who would not *welcome* such a *Saviour*, when he appears on so kind a design! who would not *bless him that cometh in the name of the Lord*, to *gather* our souls with the tenderest care, and to shelter us from wrath and ruin! that *Saviour* whose *bowels* 34 *yearned over us*, and whose *heart* poured forth its *blood* for us! Too many *reject him*, and will not hearken to the kindest calls of his compassionate voice. Unhappy creatures! *the time will come* when they too late will be convinced of their fatal error. Ver. 35.

Let each of us be solicitous for himself. Away with those 23 *vain curiosities* which serve only to amuse and distract our thoughts. Let us call, and fix them down to the great concerns of our own salvation: and, if we would secure it, let us prepare 24 to encounter difficulties, and *strive*, as for our lives, to break through all the opposition of our enemies, and resolutely *to enter in at the strait gate.* How many have *sought it* when *the door* has been *barred?* and how soon may the great *Master of* 25

[1] *You shall see me no more, till—you shall say, Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*] Some supposing these words refer to the congratulations which Christ received on his entrance into Jerusalem, (Mat. xxi. 9; Mark xi. 10; Luke xix. 38; and John xii. 13; sect. cxlvi.) urge them as a reason for placing this section after the ixth and xth chapters of John, or between the feast of the dedication and his last passover. But as our Lord repeats these words again, after his triumphant entry, (Mat. xxiii. 39, sect. clviii.) they must be capable of another interpretation, and therefore can afford no such argument; nor is there any intimation of his return into Galilee between these two feasts.—It does not imply they should ever see Jesus at all; but only that they should earnestly wish for the Messiah, and, in the extremity of their distress, be ready to entertain any one who might offer himself under that character. Compare Luke xvii. 22, 23, sect. cxxviii.

SECT. CXVIII. *the house arise* and *shut it* for ever against those who are yet trifling!

Verse 29, 27 26, 29 Let not *hypocrites* trust in vain words. *The workers of iniquity* shall be *disowned by Christ* at last, though they may have *eaten and drank in his presence.* But oh, who can express the disappointment, the rage, and despair, of those who fall from such towering *hopes*, and plunge, as from the very gates of heaven, into the lowest abyss of darkness and horror! Their hearts will endeavour to harden themselves in vain; their doleful cries shall be distinguished in that region of universal horror! but they shall not penetrate the regions of the blessed, nor interrupt the delight with which even the dearest of their *pious relatives* shall *sit down in the kingdom of God.*

31, 33 If we through grace have more substantial hopes, let us imitate the zeal and courage of our Divine Leader; and, whatever *threatenings* or *dangers* may oppose us, let us go on *day after day*, till our work be done, and our souls at length *perfected in glory.* But let us carefully distinguish between those things in which *our Lord* meant himself as our *Pattern*, and those which were peculiar to his office as *a Prophet sent from God.* That extraordinary office justified him in using that *severity of language*, when speaking of *wicked princes* and *corrupt teachers*, to which we have no call; and by which we should only bring scandal on religion, and ruin on ourselves, while we irritated, rather than convinced or reformed, those whom we undertook so indecently to rebuke.

SECT. CXIX.

Our Lord being invited to dine with a Pharisee, cures a man who had a dropsy, cautions them against an affectation of precedence, and urges them to works of charity. Luke XIV. 1—14.

LUKE XIV. 1.

AND it came to pass that, just *as* our Lord was finishing his journey through Herod's dominions, *he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees*,[a] who was a magistrate of great dis-

LUKE XIV. 1. AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Phari-

[a] *As he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees.*] As all that follows from the beginning of this xivth chapter to chap. xvii. 10, is placed by Luke before the account of his journey through Samaria to Jerusalem; and as I find no other event in any of the evangelists before the feast of dedication to which I conclude that journey refers, I am obliged (by the rule I lay down to myself of never changing the order without apparent reason,) to take all these discourses and stories just as I find them; though I cannot pretend positively to say that Luke, who, no doubt, has sometimes changed the order in his narration, has exactly observed

SECT. CXIX. Luke XIV. 1

sees to eat bread on the sabbath-day, that they watched him.

tinction,[b] by whom he was invited *to eat bread*, that is, to dine with him *on the sabbath-day*; and many of the Pharisees were present there: and, as their usual custom was, *they were* narrowly *watching him*, to make the most invidious observations on his conduct.

2 And, behold, there was a certain man before him, which had the dropsy.

2 *And, behold there was a certain man before him, that had a dropsy*, who, having heard that Jesus was to dine there, had conveyed himself thither, in hope of a cure.[c]

3 And Jesus, answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-day?

3 *And Jesus, answering* to the secret reasonings which he discerned in their minds on this occasion, *said to the doctors of the law and* other *Pharisees* who were then present, What do you think now of this case? *Is it lawful to heal* a distempered person *on the sabbath-day?* or can there be any thing in so benevolent an action inconsistent with the sacred rest which is required on that day?

4 And they held their peace.—

4 *But they were silent*; as not being able, with any face, to deny the legality of the action, and yet unwilling to say any thing which might seem to authorise or countenance those cures which Christ performed on the sabbath-day as well as at other times; and which, in the general, they had been known to censure.

—And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go:

When Jesus therefore found that they would make him no reply, he extended his compassion to the poor man; *and, taking him [by the hand,*[d]] *healed him* miraculously before them all, *and dismissed him* perfectly well, restored

it here. It is however possible, that all recorded in these chapters might pass within the compass of a few days, and so would be consistent with interpreting chap. xiii. 32, 33, in a more literal manner than is absolutely necessary.

[b] A magistrate of great distinction.] If (as Dr. Whitby supposes) the person who gave the invitation was indeed one of the grand sanhedrim, he might nevertheless have a country seat in Galilee; as the higher courts never fail of allowing some recess to their members. So that Grotius' argument for transposing this story till Christ's arrival at Jerusalem seems inconclusive.

[c] Had conveyed himself thither, &c.] I cannot think (as some suppose) that he was one of the family: because it is said that Christ dismissed, or let him go, when he was cured; ver. 4.

[d] *Taking him by the hand.*] I know some have imagined that *Christ led him aside* to avoid ostentation: but the words do not express this; and, as our Lord speaks of the cure both immediately before and after it, there can be no room to imagine he intended to conceal it. Probably the circumstance of *taking him by the hand* is mentioned as an instance of his condescension; and shews, that there was nothing in the manner of the cure which could be objected to as a servile work.

SECT. CXIX. at once to his full strength, and reduced in a moment to his proper shape and bulk.[e]

Luke XIV. 5 *And*, more fully to convince them how justifiable such an action was, even upon their own principles, as he saw they were secretly cavilling at it, *he said in answer to them*, *Which of you*, *if he have* but *an ass or an ox*, *that shall* happen to *fall into a pit*, *will not immediately draw him out* without any scruple, even *on the sabbath-day*,[f] though that is a much more laborious action, and the life of one of those animals is so much less important than the health of a man? And can you then, without the greatest injustice, condemn me for what I have now done?

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath-day?

6 *And* they were all so confounded at the force and evidence of what he said, that *they were not able to answer him again to these things*, though they had not the candour to acknowledge themselves convinced by them.

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 *And he spake* what may in one sense of the word be called *a parable*, that is, a grave, concise, and memorable sentence (see note[b], Vol. I. p. 355,) *to those who were invited* to dinner, *when he observed how they chose* and contended for *the chief seats* at the table; *and*, to reprove them for their pride, and recommend humility,

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

8 he *said unto them*, There is one thing I would on this occasion address to every one in the company, namely, *When thou art invited by any* friend *to a wedding-feast*, or any other great entertainment, remember the hint which Solomon has given, (Prov. xxv. 6, 7,) and *do not sit down in the uppermost place*, *lest another* of *more honourable* rank in life *than thee should*

8 When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room: lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 happen to *be invited by him*; *And he that invited you both should come and say to thee*, Thou

9 And he that bad thee and him, come and say to thee, Give

[e] Reduced to his proper shape and bulk.] If any ask how this could be, I answer, He that at once could cure the dropsy with a touch, could, if he please, annihilate the excess of water that caused it; and it is reasonable to believe the cure was wrought in such a manner as would make the reality and perfection of it immediately apparent.

[f] *If he have* but *an ass or an ox*, *&c.*] Our Lord had used the same reasoning before, almost in the same words, when vindicating the cure of the man whose hand was withered. (Mat. xii. 11, Vol. I. p. 286;) and at another time had urged an argument in effect the same with regard to the cure of the crooked woman: (Luke xiii. 15, § cxvii. Which may serve, among a variety of other instances, to vindicate several repetitions which must be supposed, if we desire to assert the exact and circumstantial truth of the sacred historians.—See Wotton's Miscel. Vol. II. p. 27.

this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

must *give place to this person; and thou shouldst then*, to avoid a second disgrace of this nature, *begin with shame to take the* very *lowest place*, as conscious how much thou hast exposed thyself by so haughty and foolish a behaviour. SECT. CXIX. Luke XIV. 9

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

But rather, on the contrary, *when thou art* thus *invited, go and sit down* at first *in the lowest place* thou canst find;[g] *that when he that invited thee comes* into the room, *he may say to thee*, My *friend, go up higher: then* shall thy modesty be followed with a distinguishing regard, and *thou shalt* thus *have honour in the sight* both of the master of the feast, and *of* all *them that sit at table with thee*, as having assumed nothing to thyself, but rather been contented to stoop to thine inferiors. 10

11 For whosoever exalteth himself, shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted.

For this may be laid down as a certain maxim in life, and happy is the man that attends to it, *Every one who exalts himself* beyond his proper rank and circumstances, *shall be* proportionably *humbled* and mortified; *but he that* willingly *humbles himself, shall be exalted* and honoured, as well as beloved, both by God and man. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 12, and Luke xviii. 14.) 11

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

Then said he also to him that invited him, If you desire to improve what you have to the best advantage, spend it in charity, rather than in magnificence and luxury: and *when thou makest a dinner or a supper, invite not* so much *thy rich friends, or thy brethren, or thy kindred, or neighbours;*[h] *lest they* should *also invite thee again, and* thus *a recompense be made thee*, and all thou hast in return be to receive one banquet for another; which would introduce an habit of high living, at a great expence both of money and time, and would occasion the disorder of your respective families. 12

13 But when thou makest a feast, call

But rather, *when thou wouldst make an entertain-* 13

[g] *Sit down* at first *in the lowest place.*] It is most probable that Christ himself, as illustrious a person as he was, had accordingly done thus, and *sat down* among them *in the lowest place* at the table.

[h] *Invite not* so much *thy rich friends,—or neighbours.*] Probably (as Mr Reading well conjectures) he observed in the Pharisees a humour of making magnificent feasts (on the sabbath-days, and on other occasions), and of treating great persons, chiefly out of pride, ambition, and ostentation; which might render this advice peculiarly proper, especially if he who now gave this entertainment was, as many of his brethren certainly were, very deficient in works of *charity*. See Reading's Life of Christ, p. 256.—It is plain the word *rich* (as Grotius well observes,) refers not merely to neighbours, but to the kindred and the other persons that are mentioned with them; for if these were in low circumstances, their being related to them was an argument why they should be regarded rather than neglected.

SECT. CXIX. Luke XIV. 13

ment which should turn to the surest account, let it be plain and frugal, and *invite* to it *the poor, the disabled, the lame,* [*and*] *the blind,*[i] who are incapable of providing for themselves: let these come frequently to thy house, to receive thine alms; or "send portions to them" when they cannot come. (Neh. viii. 10.) *And* this will afford thee a much nobler satisfaction than banquets can give; and, I may truly say, *thou shalt be happy in that they are not capable of making thee* such *a requital; for* their prayers shall descend in blessings on thy head; and, besides all the pleasure a generous heart will find in the very exercise of such bounties, *thou shalt be* abundantly *recompensed at the resurrection of the just,*[k] if they proceed from a real principle of piety and faith. (Compare note[a], Vol. I. p. 303.)

the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:

14 And thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

IMPROVEMENT.

How happy were they who had frequent opportunities of conversing with Christ, whose discourses were always so wise and so useful; how well did he repay all the entertainments he received in the advantages which he gave for religious improvement! In vain might his enemies watch for occasions against him. *In his tongue was the law of wisdom* as well as of *kindness,* (Prov. xxxi. 26.) And surely *the lips* of his *ministers* and *disciples* would *feed many* to their everlasting benefit, were this blessed model to be more carefully traced! (Prov. x. 21.)

Ver. 1.

8—11 Let us particularly observe what he here says concerning a modest and humble deportment, which is indeed the surest way to be honoured and respected. And let us take great heed that *that good breeding,* which consists so much in the expressions of *humility* and a readiness to prefer others to ourselves, do not degenerate into a mere form, and prove, as it too often does, the cloak of arrogance and pride; but that it have its foundation

[i] *The disabled,* &c.] We render αναπηρους *the maimed;* but the signification of the word is much more extensive, and indeed takes in both *the lame* and *the blind* afterwards mentioned; and may also include those whom the infirmities of age render *helpless.*—Grotius thinks this scripture was the foundation of the *agapæ,* or love-feasts, among the primitive Christians; but it is not evident. Pliny has a fine parallel passage. See Plin. Epist. lib. ix. epist. 30.

[k] *At the resurrection of the just.*] It is not so evident, as Dr. Clarke supposes, that δικαιων must here signify *charitable men;* it rather seems to me a strong and awakening intimation that none who neglect works of charity shall have their final lot among the righteous; which is evident from the many hundred scriptures which indispensably require *mercy* as well as *justice.* (Compare Mat. i. 19. note[a], Vol. I. p. 52.)

in a lowly opinion of ourselves, and an habitual disposition to submit even to our inferiors, when we may do it without breaking in upon the duties and decencies of life, and injuring those to whom it may be exercised, by an *indulgence* which they know not how to understand or improve. SECT. CXIX.

Let us hearken to these exhortations to *charity*, from the mouth of our charitable *Saviour*, who *gave himself for us*. And as *Christ pleased not himself*, (Rom. xv. 3.) let us not allow ourselves to squander away great quantities of money in what may gratify our own senses, or make a gawdy shew in the eyes of the vainer part of mankind; but let us be willing to spare from the luxuries and superfluities of life, that we may bestow it on the *poor* and the *distressed*. And indeed, whatever our circumstances and possessions be, we must expect that the stream of our *bounty* will soon be dried up, if it be not supplied from the fountain of a prudent *frugality*. This *self-denial* may now in some instances be painful; but it will be amply *recompensed at the resurrection of the just*. May we then meet with many whom our liberality has fed and clothed, whom our knowledge and zeal have instructed, and whom our holy examples have edified and quickened! Here will be a foundation laid for the endearments of an *eternal friendship*; when that which has been formed upon a partnership in vice, or animal pleasure, shall be for ever forgotten, or be remembered with mutual horror. Verse 12, 13 14

SECT. CXX.

Our Lord foretels, in the parable of the great supper, the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. Luke XIV. 15—24.

Luke XIV. 15.

AND when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Luke XIV. 15.

AND while Jesus was thus discoursing, *one of the guests* at the Pharisee's table *hearing these* useful *things*, and willing to keep up so good a spirit of conversation, *said to him*, *Happy* indeed *is he who shall* be honoured so far as to *eat bread*[a] *in the kingdom of God*: blessed man, who shall live in the time of the Messiah, and share the entertainments he will prepare for his people, when these virtues of humility, conde- SECT. CXX. Luke xiv. 15.

[a] *Shall eat bread.*] It is well known that the phrase, to eat bread, signifies making a meal; and this not merely at a common table, but sometimes at a least, where the provision is very sumptuous. So perhaps it might be at the table of this noble Pharisee, ver. 1. (See 2 Sam. ix. 7, 10; xii. 17, 20; and Prov. ix. 5.) Compare note[c], Vol. I. p. 461.

SER. CXX. Luke XIV. 16

scension, and charity, shall flourish in all their glory!

On this natural occasion, our Lord thought it proper to remind him and the company, that many who, on mistaken notions of this kingdom, professed to desire it, were under the force of such carnal prejudices on this head, that they would in fact slight and reject it. *And* to this purpose *he* uttered the following parable, and *said to him* that had expressed so high a notion of the entertainments of his kingdom, *A certain man made a great supper, and invited many* guests; *And he sent* out *his servant at the hour of supper to say to those that were invited*, as they delayed their coming, My master desires you would *come* away as soon as possible; *for all things* prepared for the entertainment *are now ready*. *And they all began with one* [*consent*],[b] as if by mutual agreement they had all contrived to put a slight on the entertainment, *to excuse themselves* on one pretence or another. *The first said to him* that was sent, *I have* just now *purchased a field, and I am under the necessity of going to see it*; *I entreat thee* therefore *to make my excuse*. *And another said, I have* just *bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them*, that I may see how they will draw; *I beseech thee* therefore to *make my excuse*, and assure thy master that it is important business that prevents me.[c] *And another said, I have* very lately *married a wife*, and shall have company to entertain, *and therefore* you will easily perceive *I cannot come* to attend your master's feast and neglect my own.[d] *And that servant returning*,

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant

[b] *With one* [*consent*]; απο μιας.] Of all the various methods which learned men have taken to supply the ellipsis here, (which may be seen at large in Wolfius, Observ. Vol. I p. 682, 683,) it seems to me most natural to understand the word γνωμης, that is, *with one consent*; which supposition is maintained by Beza. The variety of their excuses render φωνης, *with one voice*, less proper.

[c] *I beseech thee make my excuse*, &c.] It is a beautiful circumstance that our Lord here represents both these bargains as already made; so that going to see the farm, and to prove the oxen, that evening rather than the next morning, was merely the effect of rudeness on the one hand, and of a foolish impatient humour on the other: and could never have been urged, had they esteemed the inviter, or his entertainment. Accordingly it is commonly found in fact, that men neglect the blessings and demands of the gospel, not for the most important affairs in life with which they seldom interfere, but to indulge the caprice and folly of their own tempers, and to gratify the impulse of present passions sometimes excited on very low occasions.

[d] *I cannot come*, &c.] As the process of the *parable* represents a wise and good man offended with this excuse among the

SECT. CXX. Luke XIV. 21.

came and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

told his lord all *these things. Then the master of the house* who had made the entertainment *was* very *angry*, as he reasonably might be, to see such an affront put upon his splendid preparations, and such an ungrateful return made for the peculiar kindness and respect he had shewn in sending for these guests; *and* therefore he *said to his servants, Go out directly into the streets and lanes of the city,*[e] *and bring in hither the poor, and the disabled, and the lame, and the blind*, that they may come and partake of the entertainment; for I had rather see my house filled with such guests than empty as it now is.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

22 *And the servant* quickly came back, and *said, Sir, what thou didst* please to *command is done;* these poor distressed people are come in, and sat down at the table; *and still there is room* for more guests, and entertainment enough provided to feast many others.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

23 *And the lord said to the servant, Go out* then *into the roads* without the city, and, rather than fail, look for the poorest and most helpless travellers, who are sheltering themselves under trees *and hedges*[f]*; and,* if importunity be necessary to such, *press them* that you find there by the most earnest invitation *to come in,*[g] *that my house may be* well *filled. For*

rest, we must suppose something in the circumstance of his receiving the message, or of appointing the time for entertaining company on his own marriage, which implied a rude contempt of the inviter, and made the reply indecent. It was not necessary to descend to such particulars.

[e] *Into the streets and lanes of the city.*] This seems the true distinction between πλατεῖαι and ῥυμαὶ; the former of which signifies *a broad*, and the latter *a narrow way*, in which last the alleys may be included.

[f] *Into the roads and hedges.*] Any gross and abandoned sinners might be represented as in this wretched condition. (See Eph. ii. 12—17.) But it seems an excessive refinement of Bremius, to suppose the hedges here mentioned refer to the ceremonial law as a partition; as it likewise is to explain the first clause as relating to the proselytes of the gate, and the second to the idolatrous Gentiles. One might as well infer from ver. 24, that no Jews should be saved: and it argues a wrong taste in criticism to torture every circumstance into a fancied resemblance.

[g] *Press them* by the most earnest invitation *to come in.*] Nothing can be more apparently weak, than to imagine with St. Augustin and many others, that these words can justify the use of compulsion and force in religious matters; the absurdity and iniquity of which, I have represented at large in my sermon on that subject. It is certain the word ἀναγκαζω is often used to express an *importunity* where there could be no secular terrors; Mat. xiv. 22; Mark vi. 45; Gal. ii. 3, 14; vi. 12, (as is likewise the word βιαζεσθαι, Luke xxiv. 29, and Acts xvi. 15;) and several instances are produced by Elsner, in which the word signifies *pressing persuasion*, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 244, 245.) And here, as it would be most indecent to imagine persons forced to an entertainment, so it would have been quite impracticable for a single servant to have compelled a multitude in this sense. There is an ambiguity in the English word [*press,*] which much more exactly answers to that in the original,

SER. CX. Luke XIV. 24.

I say unto you, that none of those men who were invited, if they should now be ever so desirous of it, *shall* be admitted so much as to *taste of my supper*; since they have so rudely and ungratefully slighted it.

24 For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

And in like manner, such will the Divine conduct be with regard to the gospel. God sends his messengers in the most importunate manner to invite you Jews to come and partake of its rich entertainment: yet you neglect it on the meanest pretences, and one is too busy, and another too idle, to attend to it. But he will severely resent the affront, and (though it may seem to you as unaccountable a conduct as that which I have represented in this parable,) will call in the poor, ignorant, and wretched Gentiles, who were wandering in the most helpless circumstances in the ways of idolatry and wickedness; and his church shall be filled with them, while you, who reject his gospel, shall in righteous judgment be yourselves rejected, and perish for want of those mercies which you now despise.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 24. MAY the infinite mercy of God forbid that this should ever be our condition! The *gospel-feast*, like the sumptuous banquet of *Ahasuerus*, (Esth. i. 3, 4,) is of a very *long standing:* not only from week to week, but from age to age, God is sending
21, 22 to *invite new guests*; and, after all the millions that have been regaled by it, and nourished up to everlasting life, *there is yet room* for more. Still are *his servants* sent from one time to another, with all the fervour of the most affectionate persuasion,
23 to *urge sinners* to accept of these desirable blessings: (for such only is the *compulsion* that becomes a feast, and suits the nature of reasonable creatures.) May we not *receive the grace of God in vain!* May we not *perish*, as thousands before us have done, by *making light of the gospel!*

18, 20 It has often been observed from this *parable*, that they were *lawful occasions* which these unhappy people pleaded as their *excuse* for neglecting the invitation. And how many perish by what is indeed *lawful!* But the care of our *estates* or *cattle*, our *domestic affairs*, and our dearest *relatives*, will be destructive to

than the word our translators use: and it seems to me the part of a faithful translator, especially of the sacred writings, to preserve the ambiguities of the original, though a paraphrase, which speaks only a man's own sentiments, may sometimes venture to determine them.

us, if they be minded as our *main care*, and our hearts be so attentive to them as to forget the *one thing needful*. SECT. CXX.

Are we of the number of those who, though once blinded, impoverished, and enfeebled by sin, are now brought as welcome guests to the *table* which divine love has spread? Let us adore the grace which *opened the door* to us, and *opened our hearts* to comply with the call; by its strong and powerful, though rational and gentle influence, *compelling us to come in*. Let the *servants* employed in the message *urge* it with a becoming earnestness; as well knowing how much the heart of their *great Master* is in it, and how much the happiness of *souls* depends on their accepting it. *Lord!* may we see thy *table furnished with guests*, and ourselves be so *happy* as finally to partake of those blessings to which we are now *commanded* to *invite others!* For *blessed* indeed *are they who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!* Ver. 21 15

SECT. CXXI.

Our Lord urges upon his disciples the necessity of considering the difficulties of religion before they take up a profession of it. Luke XIV. 25, *to the end.*

LUKE XIV. 25.

LUKE XIV. 25.
AND there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

AND as great multitudes attended Christ,[a] and *went with him* in this his journey toward Jerusalem, *he turned* about *and said to them*, You now attend me from place to place with some tokens of regard; but seriously consider how much it will cost you to approve yourselves my faithful followers. SECT. CXXI. Luke XIV. 25

26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also,

If any one comes to me to be instructed in my religion, and to obtain the blessings of my kingdom, *and does not* prepare himself, on a proper occasion, to act as if he did even *hate his father and mother, and* his very *wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life too*,[b] 26

[a] *Great multitudes* attended Christ.] Perhaps the cure of the man who had the dropsy, and some expectations as to the event of Christ's visit to this Pharisee, might cause a crowd near his house; and what follows might be spoken the same sabbath, on our Lord's coming out from thence: but as the evangelist does not so expressly connect the passages, I was not willing to assert it in the paraphrase.

[b] To act as if he even did *hate his father and mother*, &c.] Strictly speaking, to hate our nearest relatives, and our own lives, would be unnatural wickedness, and equally contrary to the dictates of humanity and the genius of the gospel. But it is well known, that one thing is said to be loved and another hated in scripture, when the former is much preferred; and especially when, out of regard to it, the latter is neglected and forsaken. Compare Gen. xxix. 31; Deut. xxi. 15—17; Mal. i. 3; Rom. ix. 13; and Mat. vi. 24.

SECT. CXXI. Luke XIV.

that is, if he be not willing to abandon all these rather than to forsake me, *he cannot* really *be my disciple*, whatever he may pretend. *And whosoever does not* stedfastly resolve even to *bear his cross, and* to *come after me*, whenever he is called to tread the painful steps that I am taking in the way to crucifixion and death, *he cannot be my disciple:* and therefore, as I gave these things in charge to my apostles (Mat. x. 38, Vol. I. p. 420,) I repeat them to you as matters of universal concern, which require your most attentive consideration.

he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

28 And it is necessary to dwell on the thought; *for which of you, if he* be a person of common prudence, and *intend to build a tower*,[c] or any other edifice, *does not first* deliberately *sit down, and compute the expence* it will require, and compare it with his own circumstances, that he may judge *whether he has* a stock of wealth [*sufficient*] *to finish it? Lest when he hath laid a foundation, and is not able to complete* [*the work*] he had begun, for want of money to go through with it, *all who see it*, as they pass by, should *begin to deride him, Saying*, in contempt, *This* must be surely a wise *man*, who thus *began to build, and was not able to finish* his plan; and here his imperfect work stands a lasting monument of his great discretion!

28 For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it?*

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him.

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able, to finish.

31 *Or what* wise *king*, if he was *marching out to encounter another king in war*,[d] *does not first sit down and consider whether he* has any such advantage, as to arms, strength, or situation, as may induce him to conclude that he *is able with* no greater force than *ten thousand men to meet* and oppose *him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? And if* he find

31 Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while

[c] *If he intend to build a tower.*] This phrase naturally suggests to us the idea of a more magnificent edifice than our Lord's hearers might probably think of on this occasion. It is plain, that towers were frequently run up, probably of some slight materials, to lodge those who had the care of keeping vineyards or flocks; and they were built pretty high in proportion to their basis, that they might command the larger prospect. Compare 2 Chron. xxvi. 10; Mic. iv. 8; Isa. v. 2; Mat. xxi. 33; and Mark xii 1.

[d] *Or what king marching out to encounter another king, &c.*] According to Sir Isaac Newton's chronology, these words were spoken at our Lord's last passover, and might refer to Herod's leading his army through Judea against Aretas king of Arabia. But as Herod did not then appear to be the weaker, I cannot see that (even supposing the premises to be true) there would be any certainty of such an intended allusion.

SECT. CXXI. Luke XIV. 32

the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

he has *not*, *while he* that comes with this superior force against him *is yet at a distance, he sends an embassy, and desires terms of peace*,[c] acknowledging his readiness to submit to some things which may be disagreeable, for the preservation of his dominions, and perhaps of his life.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

33 *So then* do you consider whether you think it worth your while to adhere to me on these terms; for I assure you, I will admit you on no other; and *whosoever he be of you that does not* stedfastly resolve to *give up all his possessions*, whenever he is called to *it* on my account, *he cannot be* owned by me as *my disciple* indeed.

34 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

34 And if you are not my disciples indeed, your outward profession will be very insignificant; for though *salt* in general *is a* very *good thing*, and my servants, as I formerly intimated (Mat. v. 13, Vol. 1. p. 212), are the salt of the earth; *yet* I must again add, *if the salt be grown insipid, with what can it be seasoned?* or what can recover those whom my gospel will not influence and reclaim? And as insipid salt is such a vile and worthless thing that *it is neither fit* to be used of itself as manure *for the land, nor* even so much as fit *for* a place on *the dung-hill*, to be there mixed with other dung; [*but*] *it is thrown out of doors*, and trampled under foot like mire in the streets: you also will be no less useless and contemptible if, under the advantages and obligations of a Christian profession, you are destitute of a sincere principle of integrity and piety, and will be utterly abandoned and rejected as unprofitable servants. *He* therefore *that hath ears to hear, let him hear* it attentively; for it is a point in which not

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dung-hill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

[c] *Desires terms of peace: ερωτα τα προς ειρηνην.*] This represents the feebler person as *begging a peace:* a proper emblem of the humility and resignation with which peace is to be sought from an offended God, who is possessed of a strength, not (as in the case supposed here) merely double, but infinitely superior to ours. —The pious and amiable author of a late valuable piece called Orthodoxy and Charity, (whoever he be) has given a quite different interpretation of this passage, which, so far as I can recollect, I have not yet seen, and which I am sure deserves consideration. He explains it (p. 43,) as referring to those who have not courage to fight with their spiritual enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, and therefore make the best terms they can with them, and sit still neglecting Christ and religion. But if the passage be taken in this sense, our Lord, by declaring in the next verse that he will make no abatement in his own demands, plainly intimates how necessary it is to break through all opposition, and to determine to face all the difficulties in our way, which it will be our wisdom to view and consider, that we may be prepared with proportionable resolution.

SECT. CXXI. only the honour of my kingdom but the salvation of your own souls is concerned.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 35 MAY our most serious attention be fixed on so important a
34, 35 truth; and may this plain and candid declaration of our Lord be duly regarded by us, as ever we desire to find the advantage of that relation to him in which we are so ready to glory! If we would not be *cast out* with disdain, and *trampled under foot* as worthless and vile, let us be solicitous that there may be the salt of divine grace in our hearts; and let us undertake a religi-
28, 32 ous profession with that deliberate consideration which becomes a matter of such great importance. A hasty purpose will never bear us through the difficulties we must expect to encounter; and rash vows, and thoughtless adventures, in this case, will only expose us to the derision of others, and the keener remorse of our own minds.

26 Nor is the nature and evidence of religion such as to have any reason to fear the severest examination. The demands of Christ are indeed high; that the nearest *relatives* should be abandoned, and even *life itself* sacrificed *for his sake*; that we be at least *martyrs* in resolution, and have so much of a reciprocal affection
33 for him, as shall, like his *love* to us, be *stronger than death*. Yet how reasonable is the demand! Did he leave *his Father's bosom* for us, and shall we scruple to abandon our *houses* and our *kindred* for him? Did he expire on *the cross* for us, and shall not we be ready to *take up our crosses, and follow him?* Shall
27 it not be delightful to us to trace his most painful steps, and by the most costly sacrifices to approve our gratitude and our duty?

Blessed Jesus, lead us! and by thy grace *we will follow thee*, whatever be the path, whatever be the burden, whatever the terror of the way; knowing that if we partake with thee in *thy sufferings*, we shall at length share with thee in thy consolation and *thy glory!* (2 Tim. ii. 12.)

SECT. CXXII.

Publicans and sinners flock round our Lord, and he vindicates his readiness to receive them by the parables of the lost sheep and piece of money. Luke XV. 1—10.

LUKE XV. 1.

THUS our Lord addressed himself to the multitude, and especially to his disciples, on the sabbath-day, as he came out from the house of the noble Pharisee with whom he had dined:

LUKE XV. 1.

THEN drew near

SECT. CXXII. Luke XV. 1.

unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

now as it was *then* a season of leisure, and he appeared in public teaching the people, *all the publicans* in that place, *and* some other notorious *sinners*, who might not easily have been admitted into the Pharisee's house, *drew near to hear him* preach,[a] being charmed with the condescension which allowed of their access.

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

2 *And* Jesus, moved with compassion for them, uttered some remarkable discourses, admirably calculated for their encouragement, and that of others, who had lain under the most aggravated guilt. But *the* proud *Pharisees and scribes* who were present, *murmured* when they saw such a crowd around him, *and said, This man*, while he sets up for a religious Teacher, unaccountably *gives access to* the most profligate *sinners, and* sometimes *eats with them*, and makes no scruple to accept of invitations to their houses. (Compare Mark ii. 16, Vol. I. p. 390.)

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing:

3 *But* [*Jesus*] for the encouragement of these poor penitents, as well as to rebuke the censorious and uncharitable Pharisees, *spake to them this parable, and said, What man is* there *of you that has* a flock of *an hundred sheep*, who *will not upon losing one of them*, immediately *leave the ninety-nine* that were feeding together *in* the pastures of *the desert*,[b] *and go* from place to place in search *after that which was lost, till he find it? And having* at length *found it, he lays it on his shoulders*, greatly *rejoicing*, as a man in such a circumstance naturally would: (compare Mat. xviii. 12, 13, sect. 11.) But that the chief part of this assembly were Gentile idolaters, can never be proved, and if it could, it would be no sufficient proof of Christ's being now on the other side of Jordan. Yet I acknowledge it highly probable, that some idolatrous Gentiles might join with the multitude, who, if they understood these parables, might justly draw great encouragement from them.

[a] *All the publicans and sinners drew near to hear him.*] Some suppose they came by a particular appointment from all the neighbouring parts. But as Luke goes on in the story, without any intimation of a change either in the time or the scene of it, I am inclined to think these discourses might be delivered the same day that Christ dined with the Pharisee (sect. cxix.) which being the sabbath-day, would give the publicans, who on other days were employed in their office, a more convenient opportunity of attending.—Some have concluded (I could never conjecture for what reason,) that this happened in Galilee of the Gentiles beyond Jordan, from whence, they say, Christ went up to Jerusalem, (Luke xvii.

[b] *In* the pastures of *the desert.*] Uncultivated ground, used merely as common of pasture, was called wilderness, or desert, by the Jews, in distinction from arable, or inclosed land. Compare Josh. xv. 61; 1 Kings ii. 34; 2 Kings iii. 8; Mat. iii. 1; and Mark vi. 31. (Compare also note[c] on Mat. xviii. 12, sect. xciv.)

SECT. CXXII. Luke XV. 6.

lxiv. p. 46.) *And when he cometh home, he calls together* [*his*] *friends and neighbours, and says unto them*, with the greatest pleasure, My friends, you may now *rejoice with me; for* my labour and search have not been in vain, but *I have found my sheep which was lost.*

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 And as he thus is more delighted with the recovery of the sheep which he had lost, than with the safety of the rest, which had not wandered; *so, I say to you, that greater* and more sensible *joy will be in heaven*, among the blessed and benevolent spirits that dwell there,[c] *over one penitent sinner, than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need* such deep *repentance*,[d] or such an universal change of mind and character.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

8 *Or*, to illustrate the matter by another obvious similitude, that it may yet more powerfully strike your minds, *What* poor *woman having ten pieces of silver* money, though they were each of them but the value of a drachma, *if she lose one of them* out of her little stock, *will not* presently *light a lamp, and* take the pains to *sweep* out *the house, and search carefully* in all the corners *till she find it? And when she has*

8 Either what woman, having ten pieces of silver, if she loose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it?*

9 And when she

[c] *Greater joy will be in heaven*, &c.] Alluding, says Mons. L'Enfant (a little too coldly,) to the style of the Jews, with whom it was usual to represent the angels weeping for the corruption of men, and rejoicing at their conversion. But it seems very unwarrantable to suppose Christ thus asserting a thing merely because the Jews used thus to represent and conceive of it.—We may rather conclude from ver. 10. that, at least in some extraordinary cases, the angels are, either by immediate revelation, or otherwise, informed of the conversion of sinners, which must to those benevolent spirits be an occasion of joy; nor could any thing have been suggested more proper, to encourage the humble penitent to expose the repining Pharisee, or to animate all to zeal in so good a work, as endeavouring to promote the repentance of others.

[d] *Than over ninety-nine righteous persons*, &c.] It cannot be our Lord's meaning here, that God esteems one penitent sinner more than *ninety-nine* confirmed and established saints (who are, undoubtly, the persons spoken of as needing no repentance, or no universal change of heart and life, in which sense the word μετανοια is commonly used;) for it would be inconsistent with the Divine wisdom, goodness, and holiness, to suppose this. But it is plainly as if he had said, "As a "father peculiarly rejoices when an extravagant child is reduced to a sense "of his duty, and one whom he had considered as utterly ruined by his follies, "and perhaps as dead, returns with remorse and submission; or as any "other person who has recovered what "he had given up for gone, has a more "sensible satisfaction in it than in several other things equally valuable, "but not in such danger: so do the holy inhabitants of heaven rejoice in "the conversion of the most abandoned "sinners, and the great Father of all so "readily forgives and receives them, "that he may be represented as having "part in the joy."—Though, by the way, when human passions are ascribed to God, it is certain they are to be taken in a figurative sense, entirely exclusive of those sensations which result from the commotions of animal nature in ourselves.

hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends, and *her* neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

found it, she joyfully *calls her* female *friends* SECT. *and neighbours together*,[e] to acquaint them with CXXII. her good success; *and*, concluding it will be agreeable news to them, she *says*, *Rejoice with* Luke XV. 9 *me*, my friends, *for I have found the piece* of money *which I had lost*. And *so I say unto* 10 *you*, that *there is* in like manner a peculiar *joy* in heaven *among the angels of God over one repenting sinner*. Do not therefore wonder if I labour to promote their joy on this account, and condescend to familiar converse with those whom you proudly despise as unworthy your regard.

IMPROVEMENT.

How graceful and lovely does *our Lord* appear, while thus Ver. 1 opening his compassionate arms and heart, to these wretched *out-casts*, *for whose souls no man cared!* Who can choose but *rejoice* at this *jubilee* which he proclaimed among them, and at the cheerful *attention* which they gave to these *glad tidings of great joy?* May we, who are his followers, never *despise* the meanest or the worst of men when they seem disposed to receive religious instruction; but rather exert ourselves with a distinguished zeal, as knowing that *the joy* of the *heavenly* world in 10 their recovery will be in some measure proportionable to the extremity of their former danger.

Let us often recollect the charity and goodness of those *per-* 7 *fected spirits* who look down from their own glory with compassion on mortals wandering in *the paths of the destroyer*, and who sing anthems of thankfulness and joy, when by Divine grace they are reclaimed from them. Let every sinner be touched with a generous desire, that he who has been in so many instances the offence and *burden of the earth*, may become the *joy of heaven* by his sincere conversion. And let the *solicitude* 4, 6 with which the little possessions of *this world* are sought, when 8, 9 they are *lost* by any accident, engage us more earnestly to seek what is infinitely more valuable, our own *salvation*, and that of the immortal souls of others. May we in our different stations labour successfully for their *recovery:* that we may another day share in that higher *joy* which *angels* and glorified *saints* shall express when they see them not only reduced to the paths of virtue and happiness, but fixed in abodes of eternal glory!

[e] *She calls her* female *friends* [τας φιλας,] *and neighbours together.*] It might seem hardly worth while to ask the congratulation of her friends on so small an occasion as finding a drachma, (for that is the piece of coin here mentioned, in value not above nine-pence); but it is represented as the tenth part of her little stock, and the impressible and social temper of the sex may be perhaps thought of, as adding some propriety to the representation.

SECT. CXXIII.

Our Lord farther pursues the design of the preceding parables, by delivering that of the prodigal son. Luke XV. 11, *to the end.*

LUKE XV. 11.

SECT. CXXIII. Luke XV. 11

WITH the same design of vindicating himself in conversing with publicans and sinners, of reproving the envy of the Pharisees, and of encouraging every sincere penitent by moving representations of the Divine mercy, our Lord went on to utter another most beautiful and affecting parable. *And he said,* while this various multitude was standing round him, There was *a certain man* in plentiful circumstances, and of a very condescending temper, who *had two sons* that were now grown up to manhood. *And the younger of them,* fondly conceited of his own capacity to manage his affairs, and weary of the restraints of his father's house, *said* one day *to his* indulgent *parent, Father,* as I am now come to years of discretion, I desire thou wouldst *give me* into mine own hands *that portion of goods which,* according to an equitable distribution, *falls to my share. And he,* unwilling to make any invidious distinction in distributing his effects, *divided his living between them* both,[a] and gave them his chief stock of money, reserving the house and estate in his own hands.

LUKE XV. 11.

AND he said, A certain man had two sons:

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me.* And he divided unto them *his* living.

13 *And not many days after* this division was made, *the younger son gathering all* his treasure *together,* and pretending a design of trafficking with it, *took a journey into a very distant country; and there* forgetting his relations at home, and *living* with a knot of companions like himself, *in a* very *riotous,* debauched, and extravagant *manner,* he quickly *squandered away* the whole of *his substance.*

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 *And when he had consumed all* in this wretched course, it so happened, through the righteous judgment of God upon him, that *there was an*

14 And when he had spent all, there

[a] *Divided his living between them* both.] It is plain, no significant sense can be put on this circumstance of the parable, as referring to the dispensations of God to his creatures. It is one of those many ornamental circumstances which it would be weakness overrigorously to accommodate to the general design.

SECT. CXXIII.

Luke XV. 15.

arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

extreme famine in that country where he sojourned; *and he* soon *began to be in want* of the very necessaries of life. *And*, finding no shelter or relief among those who had been the companions of his luxury, and shared in the spoils of his substance, yet unable to brook the mortification of returning home in such circumstances, *he went and joined himself* as a servant *to a citizen of that place; who*, thinking such a worthless creature unfit for any better post, *sent him* away *into his grounds*[b] belonging to an estate in the country, where he employed him *to feed swine*; to which, however mean and disagreeable the employment was,[c] this unhappy youth, who had once lived in so much plenty and splendor, was forced to submit: *And* even then, through the unkindness of his master, and the extremity of the season, *he* was kept so poorly, that he had not bread; but *would gladly have filled his* hungry *belly with the* sorriest *husks*[d] *which the swine did eat; and* yet there was *no man* that *would* take so much pity upon him as to *give unto him* one morsel of food; so sparing did the famine make them, and so much did every one despise this foolish and scandalous prodigal.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he

And now the infamy and distress of his present situation began to lead him into serious consideration; *and coming to himself*, he so far recovered his reason, which had before been dethroned and extinguished by the mad intoxication of sensual pleasure, that *he said* in his

[b] *He sent him into his grounds.*] That was, in such a construction, should be rendered in this manner, the accurate Elsner has shewn by a variety of convincing instances. (Observ. Vol. I. p. 248.)

[c] However mean and disagreeable the employment was.] It is true, that among the ancient Greeks, the chief swineherd was looked upon as an officer of no inconsiderable rank; as evidently appears from the figure which Eumæus makes in the Odyssey: but this was an age of greater refinement; the unhappy youth was obliged to tend the swine himself; and if he be considered as a Jew, the aversion of that nation for this unclean animal must render the employment peculiarly odious to him; and probably this circumstance was chosen by our Lord to represent him as reduced to the most vile and servile state that could be imagined.

[d] *With the* sorriest *husks.*] A late translation (after Brown, Saubert, Grotius, and many others) renders κεράτων *carraways*, or the fruit of the *carob tree*, which bore a mean, though sweetish kind of fruit, in long crooked pods; which by some is called St. John's bread; but if the account which Saubert himself gives of it be true, swine would hardly have been fed with any thing but the *husky* part of this, in a time of extreme famine. I therefore choose to retain our version; but take it, on the whole, to have been the fruit of a tree something of a wild chesnut kind. See Dru in loc.

SECT. CXXIII. Luke XV. 17

own mind, Alas, *how many hired servants* in the family *of my* good *father have bread enough and to spare, while I* his child, who have known so many better days, *am* even *perishing with famine*, and am not thought worth my food by this unkind master to whom I have hired myself!

said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 Whatever be the consequence of it, I am resolved that I will sit no longer in this miserable condition: but *I will* immediately *arise, and go to my father*, if all my little remaining strength can carry me such a journey; *and*, without vainly attempting an apology, I *will say to him*, O my dear injured *father*, I humbly confess that *I have sinned against* the great God of *heaven*[e] by a long course of vice and wickedness, *and* have been guilty also of the vilest behaviour *before thee*, in abusing thy goodness, and

18 I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

19 grieving thee by my unnatural rebellion; *And*, in consequence of this, I *am no more worthy to be called thy son*, nor can I expect the favour of being admitted into thy family on such terms again; nevertheless, do not suffer me to perish, but rather *make me as one of thine hired servants*,[f] and I will be contented for the future to labour and to fare as they do, so I may but live in thy sight.

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 *And* accordingly *he arose* at that very instant, and set forward on his long journey, passing through all the stages of it with a firm resolution, Providence taking care for his subsistence, though he was obliged to beg his way; *and* at length he *came to* the neighbourhood of the house in which *his father* dwelt.

20 And he arose, and came to his father.—

But while he was yet at a considerable distance, his father, who happened to be then looking that way, *saw him*, and presently knew him, disguised as he was; *and his bowels yearned over him*, to see him in so wretched a condition: *and* immediately, as if he had forgot the dignity of his own character, and all the injuries he had

—But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion,

[e] *Sinned against* the great God of *heaven.*] This was, as Dr. Goodman observes (Parable of the Prodigal, p. 207), an acknowledgment that his *father's yoke* had been so *easy*, that his throwing it off had been an act of rebellion against God: and it shewed also that his heart was touched with a sense, not only of the folly but the guilt of his conduct, and that the fear of God began to take hold of him.

[f] *Make me as one of thine hired servants.*] He mentions this, not because such servants fared worse than slaves; but because he was himself an hired servant, and therefore naturally compared his own condition with those of that rank in his father's family

and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet.

23 And bring hither the fatted calf and kill *it*; and let us eat and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

received, *he ran* to his child, *and fell on his neck* with an eager embrace, *and* tenderly *kissed him* with tears of joy. *And the son* began to make his humble acknowledgments, as he before had purposed, and *said unto him*, O my abused and injured *father*, I am ashamed to appear in thy presence; for such has been my vileness, that *I have sinned against* the God of *heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called* and owned as *thy son*, or to receive any token of thy favourable regards. *But*, before he could make an end of the speech he intended, *the* compassionate *father* turned, and *said to his servants*, who were now gathered round them, Go immediately into the house, and *bring out the best robe* that is there,[g] *and clothe him with it, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet*, that my dear child may appear like himself; *And* let others of you run to the stall, and *bring hither the fatted calf* that is there, *and kill it*[h] for a festival entertainment; *and let us eat and be cheerful: For* I esteem this as one of the happiest days of my life, and more joyful than the birth-day of one of my children; since *this my son, that was* so long considered by me as *dead, is restored to life*;[i] *and he who was* concluded to be irrecoverably *lost, is found*, so that I have renewed hope of comfort in him. *And* the whole house was filled with joy, and, having made the entertainment ready, *they began to be cheerful.*

SECT. CXXIII. Luke XV. 21

22 23 24

[g] *The best robe.*] It is observed by Ferrarius (de Re Vestiar. lib. iii. cap. 24,) that the στολη, *or long robe*, was a garment which servants never wore; so that his father's ordering any such garment, and especially the best, to be brought, was declaring in the most moving manner that can be imagined, how far he was from intending to treat him like a servant.—His mentioning the ring and shoes spake the same language; as many learned writers have observed. See Wolfius in loc.

[h] *The fatted calf, and kill it.*] Elsner would render the word θυσατε, *sacrifice it*; truly urging that it was customary to offer a sacrifice at the birth, and sometimes at the unexpected recovery, of a child. (See Elsner. Observ. p. 249, 250.) But no such sacrifice was appointed among the Jews, nor could any have been lawfully offered but at Jerusalem, which does not appear to have been the scene of this parable; so that I can see no just reason for such a rendering.

[i] *That was dead, is restored to life.*] It is by a very common and beautiful emblem that vicious persons are represented as dead, both by sacred and profane authors; (compare 1 Tim. v. 6; Eph. ii. 1; v. 14; Wolfius in loc.) and the natural death of their children would be less grievous to pious parents, than to see them abandoned to such a course as this young sinner took.—But to suppose an allusion here to that statute, (Deut. xxi. 18—21.) which condemned a disobedient and rebellious son to death on the prosecution of his parents, would in this case be most unnatural, and utterly spoil the tenderness and grace of this speech.

SECT. CXXIII

Luke XV. 25

But while the younger son was thus received into his father's house, *his elder son was* abroad *in the field; and as on his return he approached the house, he heard* the sound of *music and dancing*, and was surprised at the discovery of such

26 unusual joy. *And calling one of the servants* to come to him, *he inquired* of him *what was the meaning of these things*, and what could have

27 occasioned this extraordinary rejoicing? *And he said to him*, It is because *thy* younger *brother is come* home; *and thy father* is so transported with joy at his unexpected return, that he *has killed the fatted calf*, and made a very splendid entertainment, *because he has received him in good health* again, and found him happily re-

28 covered to a sense of his duty. *And he was* very *angry* at the kind reception of his brother, *and* resolved that he *would not go in.*

His father therefore hearing he was there, and being told he had discovered some uneasiness, *came out* with great condescension, *and* calmly *entreated him* to be pacified, and to join with them in the festivities of the day.

29 *But*, instead of rejoicing on so happy an occasion, and running to embrace his penitent brother, *he* was still full of envy and resentment, and *replied to his father, Behold, I have served thee these many years*, and even to this day am as careful of thy affairs as if thou wast my master, rather than my father; *nor* canst thou say *I have at any time* departed from my duty, or *transgressed thy command; and yet thou hast never given me* so much as *a kid, that I might make an entertainment with* a few of *my* select

30 *friends: But as soon as* ever *this thy* favourite *son was come, who has*, as much as in him lay, *devoured thy substance with harlots* abroad, in a long course of scandalous debaucheries, to his own ruin, and the infamy of the family, *thou hast killed for him the fattest calf*, and made him as welcome as if he had been the most dutiful child upon earth.

31 *And*, though his father justly might have taken offence at his unbecoming reply, yet, with great gentleness, *he said to him, Son, thou art always with me, and* art every day receiving some token of my kindness; yea, *all that I have*

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant?

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in:—

—Therefore came his father out, and entreated him.

29 And he answering, said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

SECT. CXXIII.

Luke XV. 32

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again, and was lost, and is found.

is in a manner *thine*, as thou art heir to the bulk of my estate: [k] *But* surely, on farther consideration, thou must acknowledge that *it was fit we should feast and rejoice* to-day; *for this thy* poor *brother*, [l] *who was* but lately looked upon as *dead*, *is*, as it were, miraculously made *alive again*; *and he who was lost* to us all, *is* now happily *found*; and it will much better become thee to join with us in joy for his return, than thus peevishly to quarrel with my indulgence to him.

Now you who have heard this parable will easily see how indecent this conduct was, and how ungracious a figure this elder brother makes in my story. And I will assure you, that when you Pharisees murmur at the kindness shewn to the publicans, or even the Gentiles themselves, [m] on their sincere repentance, you act with as ill a grace, and are the objects of still greater blame, in proportion to the degree in which mens eternal interests are more important than those that relate merely to the present state.

[k] *All that I have is thine.*] This is a material intimation, and suggests a strong reason against murmuring at the indulgence shewn to great sinners; for as the joyful welcome that the father gave this younger son did not incline him to disinherit the elder brother, so neither will God, out of a partial fondness for remarkable penitents, raise them to a state of glory superior to that of those who have on the whole made a greater progress in holiness, and done him more constant and faithful services.

[l] *This thy brother.*] There is a lovely opposition between this and the 30th verse: the elder son had there indecently said, *This thy son*; the father in his reply tenderly says, *This thy brother*. And it is a moving intimation, that the best of men ought to look upon the most abandoned sinners as in some respect their brethren still; and should especially remember the relation, when there appears any inclination to return.

[m] To the publicans, or even the Gentiles themselves.] Many commentators have considered this parable in a view of peculiar application to the Jews and Gentiles; and have observed, that the murmurs of the Jews against the apostles for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, (see Acts xiii. 42—50; xxii. 21, 22; and 1 Thes. ii. 16;) are represented by the conduct of the elder brother.—This was certainly a case comprehended in our Lord's design; but he undoubtedly had something more in his intention. He meant to shew, that had the Pharisees been as eminently good as they themselves pretended to be, yet it had been very unworthy their character to take offence at the kind treatment which any sincere penitent might receive. Thus does he here, and in many parallel texts, condemn their conduct on their own principles; though elsewhere, on proper occasions, he shews the falsehood of those principles, and plainly exposes their hypocrisy and guilt. Thus the judicious Calvin states the matter; and it is strange so many learned writers should have puzzled themselves and their readers in so clear a case.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CXXIII. LET us here behold, with all due attention, the moving representation which our gracious Redeemer makes of the *folly of sinners*, and the *compassions of God;* compassions, which he describes as one who himself felt them, and who in this respect, as well as others, was *the express image of his Father.*

We have before us in this parable, a lively emblem of the character and condition of sinners in their fallen state. They are thus impatient of the most necessary restraints; thus fondly Ver. 12. conceited of their *own wisdom;* and thus, when enriched by the bounties of the great common Father, do they ungratefully run from him, and say unto God, *Depart from us, for we desire not* 13 *the knowledge of thy ways;* (Job. xxi. 14.) Sensual *pleasures* are eagerly sought; and perhaps all their earthly possessions and hopes are quickly paid as the price of them. While the means 14 of obtaining these pleasures continue, not *a serious thought* of God can find a place in their minds: and then, perhaps, *afflictions*, heavy and complicated afflictions, come upon them; yet 15, 16 even under that pressure they will often make very *hard shifts* before they will be persuaded to think of a return; till at length divine grace, working in concurrence with Providence, brings them to a better temper.

17 When they see themselves naked and indigent, enslaved and undone; when they *come to themselves*, and recover the exercise of their reason, improving it to the only purposes for which it would have been worth while to have received it;—then they feel the pangs of *penitential remorse:* then they remember the 18, 19 *blessings* they have lost, and attend to the misery they have incurred. And hereupon they are disposed humbly to confess their folly, and to prostrate themselves in the presence of their heavenly Father: they put the resolution immediately into practice; *they arise and go* unto him.

20 But oh, let us behold with wonder and pleasure the *gracious reception* they find from Divine injured goodness! He *sees them* 21 *afar off;* he *pities*, he *meets*, and *embraces* them; he interrupts their complaints and acknowledgments with tokens of his returning favour. *Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord;* (Jer. xxxi. 20.) Thus does God welcome the humble *penitent;* thus does he open the arms of his love to embrace him, and the treasures of his 22, 23 bounty to enrich him. He arrays him with *the robe* of a *Redeemer's righteousness*, dresses him in the ornaments of *sanctifying grace*, honours him with the tokens of *adopting love*,

and invests him with the glorious privileges and immunities of his *children.* And all this he does with unutterable *delight: he rejoices over him with joy; he rests in his love,* and, as it were, *rejoices over him with singing,* (Zeph. iii. 17;) and this is the joyful language of the song, My children, *that were dead, are alive again;* and though they *were lost,* they *are found.* SECT. CXXIII. Ver. 24.

Let heaven and earth unite in the *joy,* and echo back the song. Let no *elder brother* murmur at the *indulgence* with which these *prodigals* are treated; but rather welcome them back into the family, and even encourage every thing that looks like a disposition to return to it. And let those who have been thus received, wander no more: but rather let them emulate the strictest piety of those who, for *many years* have *served* their *heavenly Father,* without having in any notorious instances *transgressed his commandments.* 25, 32

SECT. CXXIV.

Christ delivers the parable of the unjust steward, and reproves the Pharisees for their covetousness and hypocrisy. Luke XVI. 1—18.

LUKE XVI. 1.

LUKE XVI. 1. AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him, that he had wasted his goods.

OUR Lord then spake another parable, by which he intended to convince his hearers of the necessity of making a right use of their worldly enjoyments: *and,* having before rebuked the Pharisees for their envious and uncharitable temper, *he said also to his disciples,* that were about him, *There was a certain rich man who had a steward,* in whom he had long put great confidence: *and he was* at last *accused to him, as having wasted his goods* which had been intrusted to his care. SECT. CXXIV. Luke XVI. 1.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

And calling him, he said unto him, What is this strange account *that I hear of thee?* Can it be true that thou hast acted so unjust and base a part? *Give an* immediate and exact *account of thine administration* and management in this office; *for thou canst be no longer steward,* with any honour to thyself, or satisfaction to me, while thou continuest under such imputations and suspicions as these. 2

3 Then the steward said within himself,

And upon this, as might be well imagined, *the steward* was much alarmed, and *said within himself,* in the reasonings of his own mind, 3

SECT. CXXIV. Luke XVI. 3. *What shall I do* in this unhappy situation of my affairs? *for my lord is taking away my stewardship*, and with it I shall lose my subsistence. *I am not able to dig*, or to apply myself to any other laborious work of husbandry;[a] nor can I expect, under this load of infamy, to be trusted by another in the business I have been accustomed to; [*and*] *I am* utterly *ashamed to beg* my bread, after having lived so handsomely in 4 the world thus long. And, after a pause, he added, *I* have at length bethought myself, and now *know what I will do;* an expedient offers itself to my mind by which I may secure myself friends, so *that when I am removed from my office, they may receive me into their houses.* 5 *And*, in pursuance of this scheme, *having called every one of his lord's debtors to him* whom he could hope to oblige by so fraudulent a proposal, *he* determined to lower the several articles in his book which stood chargeable to the account of each; and *said*, for instance, *to the first, How* 6 *much owest thou to my lord? And he said, an hundred baths of oil.*[b] *And he said to him, Take thy bill*, in which thou hast acknowledged the receipt of it,[c] *and sit down directly,*

self, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly and write fifty.

[a] *I am not able to dig*, or to apply myself to—husbandry.] Raphelius, (Annot. ex Xen. p. 104, 105,) and Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 251,) have shewn that the word σκαπτειν signifies in general, *to cultivate the land*, and especially *to prepare it for seed*; which was one of the most laborious parts of the husbandman's work in which day-labourers were employed; and consequently most fit to be mentioned by this steward, who having been used to a delicate and luxurious way of living, would naturally think of such a change of life in the most discouraging view. The expression, ουκ ισχυω, *I am not able*, or strong enough, to do it, has also a peculiar beauty in this view, which is lost in our translation, and in most others.

[b] *An hundred baths of oil.*] The Greek word βατος, is evidently derived from the Hebrew בתים, which we render *baths* in the Old Testament. (1 Kings vii. 26; 2 Chron. ii. 10; Ezra vii. 22.) According to Bishop Cumberland it contained about seven gallons, two quarts, and half a pint. Compare Joseph. Antiq. lib. viii. cap. 2, § 9.—*The measure of wheat*, κορος, mentioned in the next verse, is the כר, *cor*, or *homer*, of the Hebrews, containing about eight bushels and a half, Winchester measure. The word *homer* being familiar to an English ear, I have retained it in the version. This homer contains ten ephahs, or baths, (Ezek. xlv. 11, 14;) and each of these latter, ten omers, (Exod. xvi. 36.) Twenty homers, which he allowed the debtor to deduct, would on this computation contain 170 bushels of wheat, and might be as valuable as fifty baths, or about 378 gallons of oil; so that the obligation conferred on both these debtors might be equal.

[c] *Take thy bill*, in which thou hast acknowledged the receipt of it.] This bill probably was something equivalent to a note under his hand, acknowledging the receipt of so much oil, and promising payment for it. The alteration of this, plainly shews how much Dr. Clarke is mistaken in supposing the steward did no wrong to his master in this affair, but only gave the debtors the value of what he set off out of his own stock, he undertaking to pay his lord. See Dr. Clarke's Sermons,

and write another, in which thou shalt acknowledge the receipt of but *fifty*, and I will alter my book agreeable to that. *Then he said to another, And how much dost thou owe? And he said, An hundred homers of wheat. And he says to him, Take thy bill* back, *and write* down an acknowledgment of but *fourscore;* and remember how easy I have made thine account. SECT. CXXIV. Luke XVI. 7.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

And when *the master* heard of it, though he could not but be sensible that it was an act of great injustice, yet he *praised the unjust steward, as having done prudently* however, and found out an artful expedient for his subsistence, by making friends, who might shelter him for the present, and perhaps recommend him to some new trust, in hopes of sharing again in the spoils of his dishonesty. And *thus*, said the blessed Jesus when he had concluded the parable, *the children of this world are wiser in their way* and *generation*,[d] that is, they generally act a more prudent part with respect to their secular interests, *than* even those who may be called *the children of light*, or than good men themselves, who are enlightened by God to see where their true happiness lies, do with respect to theirs, which are so much more important; (compare John xii. 36; 1 Thes v. 5; and Eph. v. 8); for they seldom appear so thoughtful and active in the great concerns of religion, as worldly men are in pursuit of the momentary and precarious possessions of this present life. 8

8 And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

And I also *say to you*, Endeavour to *make yourselves* sure *friends with* these riches which may not improperly be called *the unrighteous* or deceitful *mammon*[e] (as so little confidence can be 9

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the

Vol. III. p. 285.) For not to say how improbable it is that this bankrupt should be able or willing to make such a considerable present, it is plain that, if he had intended it, he would have let the account remain unaltered. But by the exchange of bills, he cunningly made each of the debtors an accomplice with him in defrauding his lord, and thereby provided against a discovery.

[d] *In their generation.*] It here signifies *affairs, or actions;* as Gen. vi. 9; xxxvii. 2.

[e] *The unrighteous* or deceitful *mammon.*] Nothing can be more contrary to the whole genius of the Christian religion than to imagine that our Lord would exhort men to lay out their *ill gotten goods* in works of *charity*, when *justice* so evidently required they should make restitution to the utmost of their abilities.—*Mammon*, or *wealth*, is here called *unrighteous*, or *deceitful*, on account of its being so apt to fail the expectation of the owners; and in that view, is opposed to *true riches*, ver. 11.—*The mammon of unrighteousness* is plainly such a *Hebraism* as the *steward of unrighteousness*, ver. 8; and *the judge of unrighteousness*, chap. xviii. 6, *Gr.* which our tranlators

SECT. CXXIV. Luke. XVI. 9.

reposed in them); *that when you fail,* and die out of this world,[f] *they may receive you into everlasting habitations,* and you may for ever enjoy the reward of your pious charity and love, in an everlasting friendship with all those truly worthy persons who have been relieved by it.

mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 Let this exhortation be regarded, not only by those that abound in wealth, but by all others: for *he who,* acting on strict principles of integrity and piety, *is faithful in the smallest* [*trust*], *is,* and would in fact appear to be *faithful also in* one of *much* greater importance if it were committed to him; *and he who is unjust in the least* matter, *is,* if he can attempt it with views of impunity, *unjust also in much.*

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

11 *If therefore* it appears that *you have not been faithful in* the management of *the unrighteous* or deceitful *mammon,* as I before called those precarious treasures, *who will intrust you with the* 12 *true* [*riches*]? *And* I repeat it again, *if you have not been faithful in what was* really *another*'s and only was committed to your care and management for a little while; *who* do you think *will give you* [*that which shall be*] *your own* by an unalienable right and eternal possession?[g] You cannot sure expect so high a reward without a behaviour correspondent to it.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches*?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 But, as I formerly have said, I tell you now again, *No domestic* whatever *can serve two* different *masters; for he* assuredly *will either hate* and despise *the one, and love the other; or* at least *he will adhere to* the commands of *the one, and neglect* those of *the other:* so, in like manner, *you cannot* faithfully *serve God, and* yet at the same time be the servants of *mammon,* having

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

have with perfect fidelity changed into the *unjust steward* and the *unjust judge;* and had they taken the same liberty in many other places, they had made many scriptures plainer than they now appear to an English reader.—See Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 252, where he has shewn that ἀδικια signifies *unfaithfulness,* on which account it is often opposed to *truth.* Compare Rom. i. 18; ii. 8; and Deut. xix. 19; Mic. vi. 12. Hebr.

[f] *That when you fail,* and die out of this world.] It is with apparent propriety that our Lord suggests the thoughts of *death* as an antidote against *covetousness.* Strange it is, that so many on the very borders of the grave should be so wretchedly enslaved to that unreasonable passion!

[g] *If you have not been faithful in what was another's,* &c.] This is well expressed, though not exactly rendered, in the version of 1727. *If you have embezzled what another gave you in trust, how can he give you an estate in perpetuity?* It probably alludes to a custom of rewarding faithful stewards, by giving them some part of the estate they have managed.

your hearts engrosed by worldly interests and pursuits. (Compare Mat. vi. 24, Vol. I. p. 237.) SECT. CXXIV.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him.

And the Pharisees also, who were extremely *covetous,* stood by and *heard all these things;* Luke XVI. 14 *and they* contemptuously *derided him*[h] as a poor visionary, who did not understand human life, or only appeared to despise the world, because (as they supposed) it was out of his reach.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God.

And he said to them, You Pharisees *are they* 15 *that justify yourselves before men,* and find out a great many plausible excuses for possessing and pursuing the world as you do; *but God knows your hearts,* and knows that it is not by love to him, but to yourselves, that you are animated, even in the most specious and pompous of your actions: *for that which is highly esteemed among men is,* in many instances, *an abomination before God,* who observes the vile purposes from which it often proceeds, and cannot be imposed upon by any glittering misrepresentation or disguise. (Compare 1 Sam. xvi. 7.)

16 The law and the prophets *were* until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

But a dispensation is now opening upon 16 the world which will put you to deserved shame; for *the law and the prophets* [*were*] the only Divine revelation among you *until John* the Baptist appeared; but *from that time the kingdom of God is* publicly and plainly *preached, and every one forces his way into it;*[i] for considerable numbers, notwithstanding all your sophistry, stand well disposed to receive it, and are willing to secure its blessings at any rate. (Compare Mat. xi. 12, 13, Vol. I. p. 320.)

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

Yet 17 I would not be understood as if I intended by what I say to put any slight on former revelations; for I rather establish and vindicate them, and again declare it to you as a most solemn truth, That *it is* much *easier for heaven and earth to pass away,* and the whole system of created nature to be destroyed, *than for one tittle of the law* of God *to fail,* or the least precept of it to

[h] *They derided him.*] The word ἐξεμυκτήριζον might more exactly be rendered *they sneered.* There was a gravity and dignity in our Lord's discourse which, insolent as they were, would not permit them to laugh out; but by some scornful air they hinted to each other their mutual contempt: and they have, no doubt, seriously answered for it, as others of their temper and character will.

[i] *Forces his way into it,* εἰς αὐτὴν βιάζεται.] Some think this intimates that those who should have been readiest to *open the door,* rather attempted to *keep them out:* it certainly implies that there were strong obstacles in the way.

SECT. CXXIV

be set aside as faulty. (See Mat. v. 18, Vol. I. p. 214.) And, far from doing any thing to lessen or abate the force of it, I rather assert it in its utmost extent and spirituality; insomuch that you know I have before declared, notwithstanding all your boasted, but dangerous traditions, that *whosoever puts away his wife, and marries another*, unless it be on account of a breach of the most fundamental article of the marriage-covenant, *commits adultery; and whosoever marries her that is put away from her* former *husband* for any less important cause, *commits adultery* with her, as the first contract still continues in force, by which she is the wife of another. (Compare Mat. v. 32, Vol. I. p. 230.)

Luke XVI. 18

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband, committeth adultery.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 8 MAY *the wisdom* of *the children of this world* in their comparatively trifling concerns, excite a holy emulation in *the children of light!* Is it not much better worth our while to employ all the attention of our thoughts in observing opportunities for the good of our souls, and to exert all the force of our resolutions in improving them, than to *labour* merely for the *meat which* 9 *perishes*, for that *deceitful mammon*, that treacherous *friend*, which will at best only amuse us for a few years, and will for ever forsake us in our greatest extremity.

1, 2 Let us take occasion, from *this parable*, to think how soon we must part with all our present possessions; how soon we must *give an account* of our respective *stewardships* as those who must be *no longer stewards*. Let us therefore manage them in such a manner as may most effectually promote the great purposes of our everlasting happiness. To this end, let us remember how absolutely necessary it is that we abound in works of *charity* and *benevolence*, and that we endeavour to abstract our hearts from an over-eager attachment to these *lying vanities*; for surely the trifles of earth are no better. Let us not imagine that our particular address can find out the secret of *serving God and mammon*, 13 since *Christ* represents it as an impossibility and contradiction.

10, 12 May we be found *faithful* in what God has committed to us, whether it be *little* or *much*; and govern ourselves, not by the maxims of this vain world, but by those of the gospel! And if 14 the same temper that led the *covetous Pharisees* to *deride our Lord*, engage the children of this world to pour contempt upon us as *visionaries* and *enthusiasts*, we have much greater reason to be grieved for them than for ourselves. Their censures can be

matter of but little account to us, when we consider that the things which are *highly esteemed by men*, are often *an abomination in the sight of God*. His *law* is sacred, and the constitutions of his kingdom are *unalterable*: may the temper of our minds be so altered and disposed as may suit it! For another day, and another world, will shew that real *Christianity* is the only *wisdom*; and that all the refinements of human policy without it are but specious *madness* and laborious *ruin!* SECT. CXXIV. Ver. 15 16, 17

SECT. CXXV.

Our Lord, to enforce the preceding admonition, delivers the parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus. Luke XVI. 19, *to the end.*

LUKE XVI. 19.

THERE was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

LUKE XVI. 19.

THAT his hearers might be more effectually dissuaded from addicting themselves to worldly pursuits and carnal pleasures, Jesus added another parable, which might have been sufficient to convince the covetous Pharisees of their madness in deriding what he had before said. And he addressed himself to them in words to this effect: *There was a certain rich man who* lived in the greatest elegance and pomp; for he *wore* robes of *purple, and* vests of *fine linen, and daily feasted in a* very *splendid* and luxurious *manner*. SECT. CXXV. Luke XVI. 19

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores.

And there was in the same place *a certain poor man named Lazarus*,[a] a person indeed of eminent piety, but in the utmost indigence and distress; *who* being unable to labour, or so much as to walk, *was laid* down *at his gate*, to beg the rich man's charity; and all his body being *full of* sores and *ulcers*, he 20

21 And desiring to be fed with the

was a most miserable spectacle; *And*, being almost famished with hunger, *he* earnestly *desired to be fed*, if it were but *with the crumbs* 21

[a] *A certain poor man named Lazarus.*] An exceeding proper name, which seems (as Lud. Capellus observes) to be derived from עזר לא *Lo azer*, and signifies *a helpless person*; an etymology on all accounts much more natural than that so generally followed, which derives it from *Eliezer, God is my helper*.—Some have imagined, from the name of Lazarus, and the particular detail of circumstances, that this was an history, rather than a parable; but this must be a groundless supposition, as it is plain the incidents are parabolical. But the criticism of Lomeirus, who explains it as a mystical representation of the Jewish and Gentile church, is far more extravagant.—Dr. Lightfoot, and others, have shewn, that the Jews in their Gemara have a parable much to the same purpose.

SECT. CXXV.

which fell from the rich man's table; yea, he was in so exposed and abandoned a condition, that *the* very *dogs came and licked his sores,*[b] which lay uncovered in the open air.

Luke XVI. 21

crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 *But so it was, that* in a little time *the* poor *beggar*, worn out with the load of so great a calamity, *died; and*, being a favourite of heaven, notwithstanding all his distresses on earth, he *was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom*, the abode of happy spirits in a separate state;[c] *the rich man also died* quickly after him; for all his riches were not sufficient to procure the least continuance of his life; *and* he *was buried* with great funeral solemnity and pomp. But observe the difference of their circumstances beyond the grave. This poor sensual creature was by God's righteous vengeance condemned to everlasting misery; *and in the unseen world,*[d]

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died, and was buried.

23 And in hell he

[b] *Yea, the dogs came and licked his sores.*] Had the connection in the original been attended to, I think there could have been no debate among commentators, whether this were mentioned as an alleviation, or an addition to his calamity. For however lenient and healing the tongue of a dog may be in such cases, the words αλλα και should be rendered, *yea*; as Erasmus, Beza, Schmidius, and Calvin contend, and above all, Raphelius abundantly proves. (Annot. ex Xen. p. 106, 107.) The circumstance is surely recorded, to shew that his ulcers lay bare, and were not (as Isaiah in another case expresses it, chap. i. 6.) *either closed, or bound up, or mollified with ointment.* —Some versions add, that *no man gave unto him*; which Grotius thinks is intimated in his *wishing to be fed with the crumbs* which *the dogs* used to gather; (Mat. xv. 27.) If so, it was with singular propriety that he who denied a crumb is represented as unable to obtain a drop; but as it is not expressed in the Greek, either here, or in Abraham's reply, I did not choose to insert it.—Giving alms will be no security to those that live a sensual life.

[c] *Carried by angels into Abraham's bosom.*] The Jews assign this office to angels (see Drusius in loc.) and, no doubt, with the utmost propriety, considering how suitable it is to their benevolent nature and to the circumstances of a departed spirit. The Greeks (as Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 255, and many others have observed, assign guides to the souls of the dead, to conduct them to their respective seats. —It is strange any should render τον κολπον τυ Αβρααμ, *Abraham's bower*, or (with Jac. Capellus) *Abraham's haven.* Our translation is in all respects much more just. It alludes to the way of representing the entertainments of heaven, by sharing a magnificent banquet with Abraham and the other patriarchs; (compare Mat. viii. 11; and Luke xxii. 30.) And nothing can better describe the honour and happiness of Lazarus, who had lain in so wretched a condition before the glutton's gate, than telling us that he was placed next to Abraham, and so lay in his bosom. (Compare John xiii. 23, sect. clxx.) Thus Casaubon and Grotius well explain it.—As for *the rich man's seeing him there*, Mr. L'Enfant thinks the Jews borrowed this manner of speaking from the Greeks, who described the *seats of the blessed* as *separated* from those of *the damned* by a great impassable *river*, from the opposite banks of which they might converse. Many of them also expressly speak of a great chasm interposed. See Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 256, 257; and Grotius in loc.

[d] *In the unseen world.*] This seems generally the sense of the Greek word, αδης, as was observed before, in note [f], on Mat. xvi. 18, Vol. I. p. 566.—Both the rich man and Lazarus were in Hades, though in different regions of it. See Grotius's learned and judicious note here.

lift up his eyes, being in torments and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

being in the midst of *torments*, aggravated by all the indulgence and delicacy of his former life, *he lifted up his* weeping and despairing *eyes, and saw Abraham from afar, and* the poor despised *Lazarus* lying *in his bosom*, as a newly received guest at the heavenly banquet, placed next the father of the faithful himself.

SECT. CXXV

Luke XVI. 23

24 And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

And calling out with the greatest earnestness and importunity, *he said, O father Abraham, have compassion upon me*, a poor unhappy descendant of thine, *and send Lazarus*, not to reach out to me any of the dainties of heaven, for I presume not to ask so great a favour, but only to bring me a little water; and if I may not have a draught of it, I should be thankful if he might be permitted *to dip the tip of his finger in water to refresh my tongue*,[e] though it were but for a moment; *for I am* so *tormented in this flame*, that it excites an intolerable thirst, which is continually raging and preying on my very soul. 24

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

But *Abraham said*, with awful and inflexible severity, *Son, remember* the former days when thou and Lazarus were upon earth, *that thou didst* then *in thy life-time receive thy good things* which thou wast so foolish as to choose for thy portion, in the neglect of God and of thy soul; *and likewise Lazarus* then received [*his*] evil *things*, of which thou wast witness; *but now* the scene is changed, so that *he* in his turn *is comforted, and thou art* justly *tormented*; and neither his joy, nor thine anguish, can admit of any end or interruption. 25

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to

And besides all this, as to the favour thou desirest from the hand of Lazarus, it is a thing impossible to be granted: for *between us and you there is a great chasm fixed*; a vast unmeasurable void is interposed; *so that they who would go from hence to you*, if any should be so compassionate as to desire to help 26

[e] *Dip the tip of his finger in water*, &c.] The Hebrews drank their wine mingled with water; and large quantities of water, on one occasion or other, were used at their feasts; (see John ii. 6.) There seems therefore in this petition a proper allusion to that.—Archbishop Tillotson observes, with his usual vivacity, that this is the only instance we meet with in scripture, of any thing that looks like a prayer put up to a glorified saint, (Tillotson's Works, Vol. II. p. 142); and even here the application was in vain, and no relief was the saint capable of giving.—It is observable, the *rich man speaks* as *knowing Lazarus*, and as supposing (ver. 28) that his brethren also might know him on his appearing to them.

SECT. CXXV. Luke XVI. 27

you, *cannot; neither can they who are there come unto us;* but we are still to continue at an unapproachable distance from each other.

Then the rich man, as *he* perceived that his own case was irretrievable, *said* unto Abraham, There may however be a passage from you to the other world, as it is plain there is from thence to you; *I beseech thee therefore O father, that thou wouldst* please to *send him to my father's house,* on an errand of the utmost importance;

28 *For I have* there *five brethren,* thoughtless young creatures like myself, who are now revelling on those possessions which were once mine,[f] and are likely ere long to fall into the same misery with me: I earnestly entreat thee therefore *that he may* be sent to *testify to them* the reality and importance of this invisible world, *that they* may be awakened to avoid those evil courses that have been my ruin, and *may not also come into this place of torment.*

29 But *Abraham said* in reply *to him,* Thou knowest *they have* an excellent Divine revelation in the writings of *Moses and the prophets; let them* but *hearken to* the warnings and instructions that are given by *them,* and they have means sufficient to secure them from that danger.

30 *And* when the poor tormented creature found this also was objected to, *he* pleaded still in their behalf, and *said, Nay, father Abraham,* they will slight these as I foolishly did; *but* surely *if one go to them from the dead, they* cannot withstand so awful a messenger, but *will* undoubtedly *repent,* and reform their lives.

31 *But* Abraham put an end to the discourse, with an assurance of the fruitlessness of any such extraordinary means for their conviction; and *he said to him,* The evidences of the Divine revelation are such, that *if they hearken not to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded* to a thorough repentance and reformation

you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded

[f] *I have five brethren,* &c.] As no mention is made of any surviving wife and children, but his five brethren are described as living still together in his father's house, one would imagine that our Lord intended to represent this wretched creature as a young man, who (unhappily for himself, like many modern rakes), coming early to the possession of his estate, soon broke his constitution by debauchery, and so left his riches to the younger children of the family, having no other heirs.

though one rose from the dead.

though one should arise from the dead to visit them.[s] For though it might indeed alarm them for a time, the same prejudices and lusts which led them to despise those methods of instruction that God has given them, would also lead them ere long to slight and forget such an awful apparition as you desire they might see.

SECT. CXXV

Luke XVI. 31

IMPROVEMENT.

MOST evidently may we learn from *this parable*, that it is impossible to *know either love or hatred by any thing that is before us under the sun*; (Eccles. ix. 1.) Who that had seen the pomp and plenty of this *rich sinner*, and compared it with the indigence and misery of *Lazarus*, would have imagined that the latter had been *the child*, and the former *the enemy, of God?* But let us *judge nothing before the time*; (1 Cor. iv. 5.) Our *Lord Jesus Christ* shews us the *period* of all the prosperity of the wicked, and of all the calamities with which good men may be exercised.—And what availed the *luxuries of life*, or the magnificence of *burial*, to a wretch *tormented in flames?* Surely the fierceness of those *flames* would be proportionable to the *luxury* in which he had formerly lived, and the sense of his *torment* be heightened by the *delicacy* he had once indulged. May God awaken those unhappy persons, whatever their rank in the present life may be, who place their happiness and glory in being *clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day!* May they *lift up* their enchanted deluded *eyes*, and see that pointed *sword* of the Divine vengeance which is suspended over them by so weak a thread; and may they take this warning from one *greater than Moses and the prophets*, from one that *came from the dead* to enforce it, that they pass not *into that place of torment!*

Verse 19—21

23, 24

Let *poor afflicted saints* take comfort in what has now been read, though they may be despised and slighted by men. The time will shortly come, when those *angels* who now descend in an invisible form to *minister to them*, will appear as their *guard* to convoy them to the regions of glory. *Abraham's bosom* will

22

23

[s] *If they hearken not to Moses*, &c.] It is true, Moses no where expressly asserts *a future state of rewards and punishments*; yet the facts recorded by him strongly enforce the natural arguments in proof of it; and the prophets speak plainly of it in many places. See Psal. xvi. 9, 10, 11; xvii. 15; xxiii. 6; xlix. 14, 15; lxxiii. 17, *& seq.* Prov. xiv. 32; Eccles. iii. 17, 21; xi. 9; xii. 7, 13, 14; and Ezek. xviii. 19, 20, 21.—Bishop Atterbury has excellently shewn the justice of Abraham's assertion here, in his incomparable discourse on this text. (See his Sermons, Vol. II. Serm. 2.) The impenitence of many who saw another Lazarus raised from the dead (John xi. 46,) and the wickedness of the soldiers who were eye-witnesses to the resurrection of Christ, and yet that very day suffered themselves to be hired to bear a false testimony against it, (Mat. xxviii. 4, 15,) are most affecting and astonishing illustrations of this truth: for each of those miracles was far more convincing than such an apparition as is here referred to would have been.

SECT. CXXV

be opened to them, and the dainties of heaven be set before multitudes, who, perhaps, while on this side the grave, hardly knew how to procure even the necessaries of life.

May we never view those *seats of glory*, as this wretched *sensualist* did, at an *unapproachable distance!* Let us think seriously of his deplorable circumstances, when he asked *a drop of water* from *the tip of Lazarus's finger*, and yet was *denied.* Dreadful representation! yet made by *Christ* himself, who surely knew how to describe the case with the utmost propriety. Behold, O our souls, this *son of Abraham*, in that flaming prison, in all the restless agonies of torment and despair: and we may judge what dependence to place on a *descent from pious ancestors*, or a participation of external privileges.

We inquire not curiously into the *motives* which engaged him to request that so extraordinary a *warning* might be sent to *his brethren;* whether it might proceed from a remainder of natural affection, from a fear of meeting them in the same misery, or from a mixture of both. It is enough to observe how and upon what principles it was denied, *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* Let none vainly excuse themselves from believing the evidence of the *revelation* God has given, on a pretence that *if they saw signs and wonders they would believe.* The heart of man may be hardened against the most sensible and immediate miracle; but if that evidence were irresistible, it would ill become us to dictate to God, when, and to whom it should be given. Let us examine and acquiesce in such as he has seen fit to afford; and pass through our various scenes of life as those that have eternity in view, and are persuaded we must each of us, in a few years at farthest, be with *Lazarus in Abraham's bosom* or with *the rich man in that* tormenting *flame.*

Ver. 25

27, 28

31

30

29

SECT. CXXVI.

Christ repeats his exhortations to an inoffensive conduct and a forgiving temper; and warns his disciples not to arrogate any merit to themselves. Luke XVII. 1—11.

LUKE XVII. 1.

SECT. CXXVI

Luke XVII. 1

OUR Lord also about this time repeated to the numerous attendants who were *then* around him, several things which *he* had formerly *said* in a more private way *to the disciples;* and particularly addressed them in terms like these: Considering the general corruption of human nature, the snares of the world, and the tempta-

LUKE XVII. 1.

THEN said he unto the disciples, It

SECT. CXXVI. Luke XVII. 1.

is impossible but that offences will come: but wo *unto* him through whom they come.

tions of Satan, *it is impossible but* one way or other *offences should come;* many professing my religion will, no doubt, act unworthy of themselves, and disgrace the holy name they bear: *nevertheless, wo* [*be to him*] *by whom they come;* and let me warn you therefore, as you love your own souls, to guard against the guilt and danger of being a stumbling-block to others.

2 It were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

For I assure you, *it were better* for such a one, even *for him* that by an immoral life proves a reproach and scandal to my cause, *that* he should die by the hand of violence, and suffer the most shocking execution, yea, that *a huge mill-stone should be hanged about his neck, and he* should *be thrown into the sea, than that he should offend* and ensnare *one of these little ones* that believe in me, so as to draw the meanest of them into sin and ruin. (See Mat. xviii. 6, 7, and the notes there, sect. xciii.)

3 Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Take heed to yourselves, therefore,[a] that you may govern all your passions aright, and particularly your resentments, by which otherwise much sin may be occasioned both to yourselves and others. *And if thy brother trespass against thee* do not lay up a secret grudge against him for it, but plainly and faithfully *rebuke him,* endeavouring to convince him of the evil he has committed; *and if he* appear to *repent* of his fault, *forgive him* immediately, without insisting on any rigorous satisfaction.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

And if he trespass against thee again and again, even though he should repeat his fault *seven times in a day,* (compare Psal. cxix. 164,) *and seven times in a day return to thee,* seriously *saying, I repent* of my folly, and am heartily sorry for the injury I have done thee, *thou shalt forgive him* even these repeated offences. (Compare Mat. xviii. 21, 22, sect. xcv.)

5 And the apostles said unto the

Then the apostles said unto the Lord, Lord, we are sensible that in this instance, as well as in several others, we have need to pray thou

[a] *Take heed to yourselves.*] This contains a strong and important intimation how much sin and scandal is occasioned by a severe quarrelsome temper in the disciples of Christ; as it not only stirs up the corruptions of those with whom they contend, but leads others to think meanly of a profession which has so little efficacy to soften and sweeten the tempers of those who maintain it.

SECT. CXXVI. Luke XVII. 5.

wouldst *increase our faith:* [b] oh quicken our apprehension of the reality and importance of the motives by which all thy commands are enforced, and of the authority by which they are dictated; that we may not scruple to submit even to such precepts as these, how hard soever they may bear upon flesh and blood.

Lord, increase our faith.

6 *And the Lord said, If you had* ever so little *faith,* though it were but *as a grain of mustard-seed,* yet (as I formerly told you) it would conquer the greatest difficulties; so that *you might,* as it were, be able to *say to this sycamore-tree, Be thou rooted up, and planted in the sea, and it should* presently *obey you.* [c]

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you.

7 Endeavour therefore to live in the exercise of this noble grace, and in a series of such services as are the proper fruits of it: *but* in the midst of all, be careful to maintain the deepest humility, as in the presence of God your heavenly Master, on whom, as you are his servants, you can have no claim of merit: for *who* is there *of you, that* if he *has a servant ploughing* his ground, *or feeding his flock, will say unto him, as soon as he comes in from the field, Come* 8 *in* [d] *and sit down at the table* with me? *Or will he not rather say to him,* if it was a part of that servant's business to do it, *Make ready* somewhat for *my supper, and,* when it is prepared, *gird up thy garments* close about thee, [e] *and wait upon me while I am eating and drinking; and afterwards thou shalt* sit down to *eat* 9 *and drink* thyself? And suppose he should observe his orders with the greatest diligence, *does he* think himself obliged to *thank that servant because he hath done what was commanded him? I apprehend* he does *not,* because he has an authority over the servant, and may

7 But which of you having a servant plowing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

[b] *Increase our faith.*] Woltzogenius himself acknowledges, that their applying to Christ to strengthen their faith shews, that they believed he had a divine influence over the spirits of men. See Whitby in loc.

[c] *You might say to this sycamore-tree,* &c.] I do not apprehend this text to be entirely parallel to Mat. xvii. 20, p. 12. In this connection the expression seems proverbial, and to be as if he had said, As the least degree of miraculous faith will (as I said before) produce the greatest effects, so the least degree of true sincere piety will finally bear a man above all opposition, and enable him to conquer the world.

[d] *Come in.*] Raphelius proves that the word παρελθων has often this sense. Compare Luke xii. 37, and Acts xxiv 7. See Raphel. Annot. ex Herod. p. 263, and especially Annot. ex Xen. p. 108.

[e] *Gird up thy garments* close about thee.] Compare Luke xii. 37, p. 116.—That servants used to be girded while waiting on their masters is well shewn by Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 258, 259. See note [b] on Luke xii. 35, p. 116.

justly claim his obedience as matter of debt. SECT. CXXVI

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

Now to apply this to your own services; *so likewise ye, when you have* faithfully *done all that was commanded you* in the exactest manner, yet should still *say, Surely we are* worthless and *unprofitable servants*,[f] who cannot pretend to have merited any thing from the hand of our Master; *for we have done* no more than *what we were*, by virtue of our relation to God, and dependence upon him, indispensably *obliged to do*, as much as any purchased slave is obliged to serve his master. And assure yourselves, that no services will be so pleasing to God as those performed with such an humble spirit. Luke xvii. 10

11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

These discourses, and those above mentioned, happened in our Lord's journey to the feast of the dedication;[g] *and as he went to Jerusalem*, to attend it,[h] *he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee*, taking those parts of Samaria in his way which lay next to Galilee. 11

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us renew our guard against every thing in our conduct which might *give offence* to the meanest and *weakest*; and against every thing which might by a bad example mislead others, or furnish the enemies of religion with matter of reproach and accusation against it. Let us imbibe the *forgiving* spirit of the gospel, and, bearing in mind the numberless instances in which God has forgiven us, though we have sinned against him *not only seven times, but seventy times seven*; let us *arm ourselves*, in some degree, *with the same mind*, and endeavour to *forbear and forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake has* freely *forgiven us*. (Eph. iv. 32, and Col. iii. 13.) Verse 1, 2, 3, 4

In a sense of the weakness of our *faith*, let us pray to *Christ*, 5

[f] *Unprofitable servants.*] The word ἀχρεῖοι sometimes signifies *wicked*, (Rom. iii. 12, Mat. xxv. 30;) but in this connection it cannot have that sense. I entirely agree with Heinsius, that here, and 2 Sam. vi. 22, Septuag. it signifies *mean* or *inconsiderable*, as the best of men certainly are.

[g] In our Lord's journey to the feast of the dedication.] See note [a] on Luke xiii. 23, § cxviii; and note [a] on Luke xiv. 1, § cxix.

[h] *As he went to Jerusalem.*] As Luke has related the two little histories contained in the next section at some distance from each other, it is very difficult, (as the attentive reader will observe,) to place them together without some tautology. I have therefore inserted the introduction to one of them at the end of this section; leaving out the word ἐγένετο, *it came to pass*, which is a mere expletive; or at most does only imply that what is mentioned in the context happened in this journey, or may refer to the discourses Christ had before delivered, as we have observed in the paraphrase.

SECT. CXXVI. Ver 7—10

to *increase* it; and then those duties will be discharged with ease and delight which appeared most difficult in a distant prospect. Yet when *faith* and *patience* have had their most *perfect work*, when our Master's will has been borne with the most entire submission, and done with the most zealous dispatch, let us not pretend to place any *merit* in our own actions or sufferings; but let us think of ourselves as the *servants* of God, yea, as *unprofitable servants*, whose *goodness extendeth not* to our great Master: and to the riches of his grace let us ascribe it, that our feeble powers are strengthened to the performance of our duty; and that our worthless services are accepted, and the numberless deficiences of them mercifully excused.

SECT. CXXVII.

Christ travelling through Samaria, rebukes the intemperate zeal of James and John against those who refused to grant him entertainment; and heals ten lepers. Luke IX. 51—56; XVII. 12—19.

LUKE IX. 51.

IT was observed in the close of the former section, that our Lord was now on his journey from Galilee, near the feast of the dedication:[a]

LUKE IX. 51. AND it came to

[a] Near the feast of the dedication.] Taking it for granted that the following word, *αναλημψεως*, refers to *Christ's ascension*, (the reasons for which I shall give below,) I think this the only place where this little story can properly come in. Most harmonizers place it just before the feast of tabernacles; (of which we had an account in the seventh and eighth chapters of John, from sect. xcviii. to cv.) and chiefly on their authority, without a critical examination, I had mentioned it in that connection in my Sermon against Persecution. p. 3. But I am now convinced that could not be the time; not only as it would increase the difficulty, by supposing Luke then to say, that *the time of his being received up was fulfilled*, though it must have been above *half a year* before his death; but chiefly because that was not the last journey he made from Galilee to Jerusalem, and because (as we observed on John vii. 10, note [h], p. 44.) he made that journey with all possible secrecy; whereas here he had a train of attendants.—No commentators (on our interpretation of *αναλημψεως*) have, for the obvious reason hinted above, thought of placing it higher; and lower I think it cannot be brought; for though I was once strongly inclined to take the words in their most literal sense, and to conclude this happened when Christ was going from Galilee to Jerusalem just before his ascension, after having manifested his resurrection by his appearance to the five hundred brethren, 1 Cor. xv. 6. (compare Mat. xxviii. 7, 16—18;) I have been obliged to give up that hypothesis, considering that he never after his resurrection appeared so publicly as in this story (compare Acts i. 3, x. 40, 41), and that he had then no difficulties to expect at Jerusalem against which he should stedfastly set his face.—And as for his journey to Jerusalem just before the passover at which he suffered, he went from Ephraim near the wilderness (John xi. 54,) and passed through Jericho, (Luke xix. 1,) so that Samaria did not lie in his way. Nor is there, that I can find, any proof that he ever went back to Galilee, between the feast of dedication and his death; which I think sufficiently accounts

pass when, the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.

and it came to pass, that as the days were now almost *fulfilled, in which* he knew *he should be received up* to heaven again,[b] having dispatched the ministry which he was to discharge on earth; notwithstanding all the painful scenes through which he was yet to pass, his heart was so animated with a regard to his father's honour and the salvation of men, and so cheered with the views of his own approaching exaltation and glory, that, in defiance of all his most inveterate enemies, *he resolutely set his face to go* up *to Jerusalem*, though he knew it was the last journey he should take from Galilee thither, and that tortures and death awaited him there.

SECT. CXXVI. Luke IX. 51.

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him.

And, as his way lay through Samaria, being a stranger there, *he sent messengers before his face, who in their progress, entered into a village of the Samaritans to prepare entertainment for him*; only desiring to take a lodging there, and to pay for their accommodation.

52

53 And they did

But the Samaritans had such a national grudge against

53

for the use of the phrase of the days or time being fulfilled, &c.

[b] *As the days were fulfilled in which he should be received up*: ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναλήψεως αὐτοῦ.] In all the reasonings of the former note, I have taken it for granted that ἀναλήψεως here signifies Christ's being *taken up to heaven*: and this is so generally the signification of the word, that I wonder any learned men should have interpreted it in a different manner.—Sir Isaac Newton, merely to suit with his hypothesis of preserving the order of Matthew unvaried, strangely supposes that this occurrence happened in the first year of Christ's preaching, (Newt. on the Prophecies p. 155.) and interprets the passage before us as if ἀναλήψις were the same with ἀνάοχη, *a renewed entertainment*, which would make it no exact date at all; but might indifferently be applied to any other feast.—Heinsius confounds it with ὕψωσις, and interprets it of his being *lifted up* on the cross: though it is certain, the ideas of being *lifted up* to a state of suspension, and *taken* or *received up*, are extremely different.—A learned friend, for whose judgment I have justly a great regard, observing that ἁρπάζω sometimes signifies a *seizure*, ingeniously conjectures that ἀνάληψις may signify *Christ's being seized again*; imagining it may refer to a former seizure at Nazareth, Luke iv. 29; urging farther that ἀναλαμβάνω signifies *to take again*, (and referring I think without sufficient evidence) to Acts xx. 13, 14. xxiii. 31, compared with ver. 10; and Eph. vi. 13, compared with ver. 11; in proof of it. But I beg leave, with all due deference, to observe, that συλλαμβάνω is the word which Luke uses for *taking*, in the sense this worthy person supposes, as denoting *to seize*, (compare Acts i. 16. and Luke xxii. 54;) in which he is supported by the authority of Aristotle, Euripides, and the best Greek Classics. And therefore since the word is plainly used with reference to Christ's ascension, Mark xvi. 19; Acts i. 2, 11, 22; 1 Tim. iii. 16; as also to that of Elijah, 2 Kings ii. 10, 11, Septuag. and since in all the places referred to above, it may be rendered by *taking up*, (see Grotius on Mark xvi. 19,) I scruple not at all, with the most ancient versions, and the generality of critics, to follow the usual interpretation which refers ἀνάληψις to *Christ's ascension*; especially since no considerable difficulty would be removed by admitting any of the preceding different interpretations.—That the word days signifies no more than time, and is sometimes used to express what passes in an instant, is very evident from 2 Kings ii. 1, and Gen. xxv. 24, Septuag.

SECT. CXXVII. Luke IX. 53

the Jews, that *they would not receive him*, nor grant him the common rites of hospitality due to any stranger, *because his face was directed towards Jerusalem*; and they concluded, from the season of the year, that this visit was intended as a peculiar honour to the temple there.[c]

not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 *And when his disciples, James and John*, who attended him,[d] *saw it, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we speak for fire to come down from heaven to destroy them, as Elijah did* with regard to his enemies, (2 Kings i. 10, 12;) for surely one word in such a case will do it, and the artillery of heaven will be much more ready to avenge such an affront offered to thee, who art so much superior to any of the prophets?

54 And when his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 *But* [*Jesus*] *turning* short upon them, *rebuked them* with a becoming severity, *and said, Ye know not what kind of spirit ye are of*; you neither consider the genius of the gospel, so much more gentle than that of the law, nor do you sufficiently know your own hearts; and if you were more diligently to examine them, you would soon find that there is a great deal of personal resentment and ostentation, mingled with all that zeal for me which you so warmly express on this occasion. But I reject your motion as absolutely unfit to be complied with; *for the Son of man came not* into the world to erect his kingdom by military force, or by any other method *to destroy mens lives, but to save them*; and therefore will exert his miraculous power in works of mercy and benevolence, and

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.

[c] As a peculiar honour to the temple there.] None of the feasts observed at Jerusalem could be more remarkable in this view, as this was kept in commemoration of the temple's being purified, after it had been polluted by Antiochus Epiphanes, to whose idolatrous impositions the Samaritans had willingly offered to submit; as was observed before in note s on John iv. 9, Vol. I. p. 169. Josephus observes (Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 6. (al. 5.) § 1. and Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 12, (al. 11.) § 3.) that the Jews going from Galilee to Jerusalem at their public feasts, took Samaria in their way: and it might be resented as something of an affront, considering the antipathy of the two nations.

[d] *James and John*, who attended him.] That these disciples, so remarkably distinguished by their Lord's favour, should have some distinguished zeal and faith, may seem less wonderful, than that a person of so sweet a disposition as John should make so severe a proposal. (Compare sect. xcvi. Impr. p. 36.)—The affinity which this story has to the other, with which Luke has connected it, is (as Grotius justly observes,) a sufficient reason for his having thus transposed it.

And they went to another village.

not of terror and vengeance. *And they* depart- SECT.
ed from that place, and *went on* till they came CXXVII.
to another village.

Luke XVII. 12.

Luke XVII. 12

And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off.

And as he entered into a certain neighbouring *village, there met him ten men who were lepers,* and who on that account were shut out from the towns to which they belonged; and as in this miserable state they could have no society with any but themselves, both Jews and Samaritans conversed promiscuously together.

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

And standing afar off, lest they should pollute passengers who might come too near them, *they lifted up their voice, and said* with great earnestness, having heard of the fame of Christ, *Jesus, Master,* we beseech thee to *have mercy upon us,* as thou hast already extended it to others in these deplorable circumstances.

14 And when he saw *them,* he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that as they went they were cleansed.

And, seeing them as they stood crying to him, *he said unto them, Go, shew yourselves to the priests;* intimating that the cure they desired should be performed by the way. *And it came to pass, that as they were going* in obedience to his word, *they were* all miraculously *cleansed* by the power of Christ, the efficacy of which was such as to operate at a distance as well as near.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God;

And one of them, perceiving he was healed, was so affected with it, that he immediately *returned* with an heart full of gratitude and joy, *glorifying God with a loud voice;* and made a free and open acknowledgment of so signal a mercy.

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

And, presenting himself before Jesus, *he fell down on his face at his feet, giving* the most affectionate *thanks unto him* as the immediate Author of his cure; *and* it is remarkable that *he was a Samaritan.*

17 And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

And Jesus observing it, *answered and said, Were there not ten* lepers *cleansed? but where* [*are*] *the* other *nine,* of whom it might have been expected, as they were Jews, that they should have expressed a greater sense of piety, and have been more ready to thank God for their deliverance?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

How is it, that of all who were cleansed, *none are found who have returned to give glory to God but this* poor *stranger* to the commonwealth of Israel?

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.

And he said to him, Arise, go thy way; this *thy faith* in my power *has saved thee,* and been happily made the means of thy cure; and from

SECT. CXXVII. these grateful sentiments, with which thy heart is filled, thou mayest conclude the cure thou hast received is given thee in mercy.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke ix. 52 WHO would not have imagined that the blessed *Jesus* should have been most cordially welcome wherever he came, when there was grace in all his words, and benevolence in all his actions? Yet these *Samaritans would not receive him* because he was a *Jew*. And thus do unhappy prejudices, taken up on imaginary grounds, against men, and things in the general, sometimes injure the best of men, and prove much more hurtful to the persons themselves by whom they are entertained.

54 The rash *disciples* would have *called for fire from heaven;* and let us observe how *Christ* treated the proposal. He treated it like himself; like the kind compassionate Friend of human nature; and also like one who well *knew what was in man*, (John ii. 25.) and how little human terrors and severities can do towards producing a real conversion. Yet *fire from heaven* might have carried along with it some rational ground of conviction, which penal laws and sanguinary executions can never produce. What then would *Christ* have said to these *disciples* if they had themselves proposed to *smite with the sword*, or to *cast fire-brands* in-
55 to the houses of these inhospitable men? Little do they *know their own spirit;* little do they understand either the true genius or the true interest of the gospel, who have recourse to such violent methods as these, to extirpate heresy, and to propagate truth. Let us bless God, that neither the guilt, nor the misery of such a conduct is ours.

Let us learn to *search our own hearts*, that we may form a thorough acquaintance with ourselves; which will greatly promote both the comfort and usefulness of life. Especially let us attend to our aims and intentions, and be greatly jealous over our own hearts, lest we indulge our irregular passions under religious pretences, and set up the standards of malice and pride *in the name of the Lord.*

Luke xvii. 12—16 From the story of the *ten lepers* let us learn, importunately to seek the influences of *Christ*, to purge us from that far more odious and fatal disease which sin has spread over our whole nature; and, after the example of the *Samaritan*, let us *own the*
17, 18 *mercy* we have received. Have we not reason to fear that, of the multitudes who are indebted to the divine goodness, there is *not one in ten* who has a becoming sense of it? Let us labour to impress our hearts deeply with such a sense. Let us remember what it is that God expects of us; and let us farther consider that, as the exercise of *gratitude* towards such a Benefactor is

most reasonable, so also in proportion it is most delightful to the soul: it is indeed (as one well expresses it) like the *incense* of the *Jewish priest*, which, while it did an honour to God, did likewise regale with its own fragrancy the person by whom it was offered.

SECT. CXXVIII.

Our Lord cautions the Jews against expecting a pompous kingdom of the Messiah, and warns them of the approaching national destruction which would be the consequence of rejecting him. Luke XVII. 20, *to the end.*

LUKE XVII. 20.

AND when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come; he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here, or, lo there: for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

LUKE XVII. 20.

THUS our Lord went on his journey, and at length came to Jerusalem. *And* it was about this time that, *being asked by* some of *the Pharisees*[a] *when the kingdom of God*, which he had so often mentioned as approaching, *should* actually *come*; *he answered them, and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with* that external pomp and *observation* of men which you expect. *Neither shall they* point to this or that remarkable place, and, *say, Behold* [*it is*] *here, or, behold* [*it is*] *there. For behold,* and observe it attentively, *the kingdom of God is* already *among you:*[b] though, because it is an inward and spiritual kingdom, erected in the hearts of men, and not attended with outward grandeur, you overlook it as unworthy your regards.

And he afterwards *said to the disciples* apart, Though you do indeed undergo some present difficulties, in consequence of your adherence to me, yet you have so much greater extremities before you, that *the time will come when you shall wish to see one of these days of the Son of man, and shall not see it*; and the whole Jewish nation having rejected Me, the true Messiah, shall yet long for the appearance of him whom they expect under that character, and eagerly listen to every one that pretends

SECT. CXXVIII. Luke XVII. 20. 21. 22.

[a] *Being asked by* some of *the Pharisees.*] I pretend not to say whether this was at Jerusalem or some neighbouring place; nor is it any way material to determine it.

[b] *The kingdom of God is among you.*] So I render the words ἐντὸς ὑμῶν, referring the reader to those exact critics in the Greek language, Beza and Raphelius (Annot. ex. Xen. p. 109, 110,) for a more particular vindication of it. It is certain our Lord could not properly say the kingdom of God was in the Pharisees to whom he spoke, whose temper was entirely alienated from the nature and design of it.

SECT. CXXVIII Luke XVII. 23.

to it. *And* accordingly *they shall say to you, Behold, [he is] here, or behold [he is] there; [but] do not you go out* on hearing such reports to seek him, *nor* join to *follow [them]* in any of their vain delusive schemes. For he will indeed come, but in a very different manner from what they expect; even to execute upon them a sudden and unavoidable destruction: *for as the lightning which lightens from one [part] under heaven, shines* in a moment with the greatest swiftness *to the other [part] under heaven; so also* in as swift and terrible a manner *shall* the coming of *the Son of man be in his day,* when he appears to plead the cause of that gospel which has been so generally despised. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 23, 27, sect clxi.) *Nevertheless, he must first suffer many things, and be* yet more opprobriously and solemnly *rejected by this generation* of men, who shall by this public and national act of impiety and rebellion fill up the measure of their iniquities. (Compare Luke xxiii. 18—21; John xix. 15; Acts iii. 13—15.)

Then shall impending vengeance fall upon them at once: *and as it was in the days of Noah* which preceded the flood, *so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man,* or in those days when he shall come in the manner I have now described for the destruction of his enemies. For, notwithstanding the express predictions of divine judgments approaching, they went on with their usual course as if there were no danger; *they did eat, they drank, they married wives, [and]* their daughters *were given in marriage;* and with a confident security they persisted in the business, entertainments, and luxuries of life, *till the* very *day in which Noah entered into the ark; and* then *the deluge came* with irresistible fury, so that it overbore *and destroyed them all* at once; (Gen. vi. 13; vii. 21.)

Likewise also as it was at Sodom *in the days of Lot, they did eat and drink, they bought and sold, they planted* vineyards, *and built* magnificent houses, and never thought themselves more secure, or their pleasant country more like to flourish; Thus did they carelessly go on, despising every admonition of their guilt and danger: *but on the* very *day when Lot went out of Sodom,* an horrible tempest of *fire and brim-*

23 And they shall say to you, See here, or, see there: go not after *them,* nor follow *them.*

24 For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark: and the flood came and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot, they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded:

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brim-

stone from heaven, and destroyed them all:

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

stone was rained down by the Lord *from heaven, and* with a sudden overthrow *destroyed them all.* (Gen. xix: 14, 24.) *Even so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed,* when he will sensibly display his power in the destruction of this sinful people: the Jewish nation shall be as careless and confident as if there was not the least danger, indulging themselves in all kinds of luxury and extravagance,[c] till they shall see ruin surrounding them on every side, from which it will be as impossible for them to escape, as it was for the sinners of the old world, or the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 37—39, sect. clxiii.)

SECT. CXXVIII. Luke XVII. 30

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

In that day, if any one shall be taking the air *on the house-top,* or be retired thither for any other purpose, *and his* best dress and *furniture be in the house, let him not come down* into the house *to take it away;*[d] but let him flee the readiest way by those steps which go down on the outside of the building: *and he that is* at work *in the field,* stripped of his upper-garments, *let him likewise not return back,* though it be but a few steps, to take it. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 17, 18, sect. clxi.)

31

32 Remember Lot's wife.

But *remember* the awful example of *Lot's wife,* with the dreadful issue of her delaying and looking back; (Gen. xix. 26.) and take heed lest, like her, you perish in that sudden vengeance, which shall overtake your former abode, if you allow yourselves to linger in it, or turn back for the sake of any thing you have left there.

32

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose

For in that day, *he that shall seek to preserve his life* by retiring into some fortified city, and especially into that where it might seem he should be safest, *shall lose it; but he that shall* be thought to take the

33

[c] Indulging themselves in all kinds of luxury and extravagance.] It is not unseasonable for Great Britain to recollect, that when a pompous and luxurious way of living has come to its height in many of the most considerable ancient and modern nations, there has been a very sudden transition to the lowest state of servitude and ruin. All histories abound with instances of this kind; and God grant that our own age may not add one to the number!

[d] *Let him not come down* into the house *to take it away.*] This shews, beyond all controversy, that this discourse refers not to the *final judgment,* from which there can be *no escape;* but to the *destruction of Jerusalem,* from which it is well known that many Christians were preserved by this caution. See Grotius in loc.—The Jewish houses were built with a flat roof, and had stairs on the outside to go down from the top. Compare note [e] on Luke v. 19, Vol. I. p. 258.

SECT. CXXVIII Luke XVII. 33

ready way to *lose his life, shall preserve it;* for they who regard my admonitions, and retire, however their conduct may be censured as imprudent, shall survive the general ruin.

his life, shall preserve it.

34 *I tell you, in that night,* that gloomy calamitous time, the Providence of God shall be strangely seen, in delivering some of my disciples, when others in the very same places and circumstances shall perish in the common calamity: *there shall,* for instance, *be two persons* lying *in the same bed;* and *the one shall be taken* by the enemy,[c] *and the other dismissed.*

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 *Two women shall be grinding together* at the same mill; *the one shall be taken, and the other dismissed.*

35 Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 And *two men shall be* working or walking together *in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other dismissed.* (Compare Mat. xxiv. 40, 41, sect. clxiii.)

36 Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 *And they answered and said to him, Where, Lord,* and to whom shall this destruction happen?[f] *And he said to them,* That common proverb is applicable to the present occasion, *Wheresoever the carcase* [*is*], *there will the eagles be gathered together;*[g] wherever the impenitent and unbelieving Jews are, the vengeance of God will pursue them, and the Roman eagles shall (as it were) fly upon them as a helpless prey; and so, where their numbers are the largest, there the destruction will be greatest and most terrible. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 28, sect. clxi.)

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 20. MAY our minds be formed to a true taste and relish for the *kingdom of God!* and may we learn wherein it *consists;* not, like the kingdoms of this world, in external pomp and splendour,

[c] *The one shall be taken* by the enemy.] That this is the sense of the word παραλαμβάνεσθαι, and that ἀφίεσθαι in the latter clause should be rendered *dismissed,* or *let go,* I think Elsner has abundantly proved; Observ. Vol. I. p. 262, 263.—He has likewise shewn there, how customary it was for *women* to *grind at the mill.* See also Bos. Exerc. p. 30.

[f] *Where, Lord,* &c.] I have seen few paraphrases which do not supersede this question: I have forbore mentioning Jerusalem above, that I might leave room for it.

[g] *Wheresoever the carcase is,* &c.] Dr. Clarke has explained the general sense of this proverb with great judgment. (See his Seventeen Sermons, p. 381, & *seq.*) It is, as if it had been said, *The like causes will produce the like effects.* But it seems to suggest so proper an allusion to the Roman standards, and to the carnage they made of the Jews, that I could not forbear introducing the mention of it.

but *in righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Ghost,* and that inward subjection of soul to the Divine government which is the essence of religion, and the grand security and felicity of our natures! Many are, like the *Pharisees*, talking of it, and expecting it, while it is *among them*, and they know it not; and, perhaps, despise the humble Christians *in whom* it resides, and most eminently triumphs. May they who think most lightly of it never have cause to *wish* at last for the return of those *days of the Son of man*, which are now their burden, rather than their pleasure, while they hear vital and inward religion in vain recommended and enforced! SECT. CXXVIII Ver. 21 22

What *our Lord* says of *his coming* to the destruction of *Jerusalem*, may be applied, as it is elsewhere, to his *appearance* at the *final judgment*, of which the former was a figure. Thus shall the men of *that generation* be immersed in business and pleasure; and that tremendous *day* shall *come upon them*, even *as a thief in the night;* so that they shall find themselves overwhelmed with irrecoverable ruin, while they cry, *Peace and safety;* (1 Thes. v. 2. 3.) And thus doth the awful *hour of death*, which consigns men over to judgment, *surprise* the generality of mankind, while they are thoughtless of it and unprepared for its approach, amidst all the solemn warnings of it which they daily receive. May we be always in a prepared posture, and daily live as on the verge of eternity! 26—30

And if once we are engaged in a course of serious preparation, let us *remember Lot's wife*, and take heed that we *turn not back* again. We *flee*, as *for our lives;* let us not *look behind us*. Whatever is to be *left*, whatever is to be *lost*, it is enough if our *life be given us as for a prey.* 32 31

If we have any just hope that it will be so given us, we have a great deal of reason to own and adore the riches of divine grace to us, of that distinguishing grace which has *taken us* when others are *left;* some, perhaps, employed in the *same business*, and dwelling in the *same place;* and, may not I add, some lying in the *same bed* too! 34—36

In a word, let all seriously bethink themselves, and *flee from the wrath to come.* God *spared not Judea*, that favourite country, when they rejected his gospel, and his Son: *let us fear, lest he also spare not us:* (Rom. xi. 20, 21.) In this respect also, *wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.* The same causes will produce the same effects; and when we, in particular, of these happy, but sinful nations, consider our numerous and aggravated provocations, we shall see much greater reason to wonder that the *judgments of God* have been so long delayed, than that they should at last fall upon us with an insupportable weight. 37

SECT. CXXIX.

Christ presses his disciples to perseverance in prayer, by the parable of the importunate widow; and recommends humility by that of the Pharisee and publican. Luke XVIII. 1—14.

LUKE XVIII. 1.

SECT. CXXIX. Luke XVIII. 1

THUS our Lord discoursed with his disciples of the approaching destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans; *and*, for their encouragement under those hardships, which they might in the mean time expect, from their unbelieving countrymen, or others, *he spake a parable to them*; which was intended to inculcate upon them this great truth, *that*, how distressed soever their circumstances might be, *they ought always to pray* with faith and perseverance, *and not to faint* under their trials.

LUKE XVIII. 1. AND he spake a parable unto them, *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint:

2 For this purpose he discoursed to them in the following manner, *saying*, *There was a judge in a certain city, who neither feared God, nor reverenced man*; but was wicked enough to set light by all regards to both, and to make his own humour and secular interest the only rule of his actions. *And there was a widow in that city* who had sustained some injury from an enemy more powerful than herself; *and*, having no other way to obtain redress, *she came to him*, at a place and time when she could not be denied access, *and said*, I come to put myself under the protection of the law, and to demand thine assistance as a magistrate, to *do me justice against mine adversary*,[a] that I may not sink under his oppressive attempts. This was her case *and* plea; yet as she brought no present in her hand, *he would not, for a* considerable *time*, take any notice of it: *but*, as she still persevered in her petition, *he afterwards said within himself*, *Though* indeed *I neither fear God, nor reverence man*, and therefore care not what becomes of this cause, or who has the right or the wrong of it; *Yet because this* importunate *widow gives me*

2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.

3 And there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet because this widow troubleth me,

[a] *Do me justice against mine adversary.*] This is the undoubted import of the phrase ἐκδίκησόν με; and care should have been taken in the version to express it so as not to suggest the idea of *revenge*.

I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

trouble by her continued application, *I will do her justice, lest* by her *coming perpetually* to me with this petition, *she* even stun and *weary me out* with her cries.[b] SECT. CXXIX. Luke XVIII. 5

And the Lord said, Hear and observe, *what the unjust judge saith* upon this remarkable occasion, and how he owns himself to be prevailed on by the continual cries of one whom otherwise he would not have regarded. 6

And if the earnest importunity of a poor widow thus prevailed on an unrighteous person, *shall not* a righteous *God* much more be moved to *vindicate his own elect,* his chosen and dearly beloved people, *that cry to him day and night,* under the cruel oppression of their insulting enemies, even *though he* may seem to *bear long with them,* to give them space for repentance?[c] 7

Yes, *I say unto you, he will* certainly *vindicate them;* and when he once undertakes it, he will do it *speedily* too; and this generation of men shall see and feel it to their terror. 8

Nevertheless, when the Son of man, having been put in possession of his glorious kingdom, *comes* to appear for this important purpose, *will he find faith in the land?*[d] The persecution will be so severe as almost to bear it down; but let the remembrance of what I have now spoken, be a comfort to my people, and a warning to those that injure them.

[b] *She* even stun and *weary me out.*] The word ὑπωπιάζῃ is very emphatical, and signifies *to stun* or *beat down* by violent and repeated blows on the head. Compare 1 Cor. ix. 27.

[c] *Though he* may seem to *bear long with them,* &c.] The learned Elsner supposes μακροθυμῶν, with a small alteration in the accent, to correspond to βοώντων, and would render it, *Shall he not avenge his elect, who cry to him, and wait patiently for it,* that is, for his appearance in their favour? (Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 265, 266.) But, as I cannot think the words will naturally bear such a construction, or that the authorities he produces are satisfactory, I choose to retain our version. Nor can I, on this interpretation, perceive any inconsistency between ver. 7 and 8, since it is plain, God might *wait long,* and yet at length execute a *speedy* and *sudden* vengeance on the persecuting enemies of his people. Compare Psal. lxxiii. 19; Hab. ii. 3; and especially Ecclus. xxxv. 18; to which words Grotius supposes there is an allusion here.

[d] *Will he find faith in the land?*] It is evident the word γη often signifies, not *the earth* in general, but some particular *land* or *country;* as in Acts vii. 3, 4, 11, and in numberless other places. And the context here limits it to the less extensive signification.—The believing Hebrews were evidently in great danger of being wearied out with their persecutions and distresses. (Compare Heb. iii. 12—14; x. 23—39; xii. 1—4; Jam. i. 1—4; ii. 6; v. 10; 1 Pet. ii. 20—25; iii. 14—17; iv. 1, 2, 12—19; v. 9, 10.—Mr. Fleming argues from hence, that deism shall prevail very much towards the conclusion of the Millennium: (Chrystology, Vol. II. p. 358.) but it is evident from the connection, as stated above, that this cannot justly be inferred from this text; nor does the fact itself seem at all probable.

SECT. CXXIX. Luke XVIII. 9

He also spake this other *parable to certain* persons, *who*, like the proud self-justifying Pharisees, with an arrogant conceit of their own merit, *trusted in themselves, that they were righ-*
10 *teous, and despised others* as reprobates. There were, said he, *Two men* who *went up to the temple to pray* there, choosing to offer up their particular devotions at that sacred place; and *the one* of them was *a Pharisee*, one of that sect so greatly honoured among you, *and the other a publican*, whom you are used to number with
11 the most contemptible of mankind. And *the Pharisee standing by himself*, at as great a distance as he could from the miserable sinner, who had entered the temple with him, as if he feared being polluted by touching him, or any other person less holy than himself;[e] *prayed in this manner, O God, I thank thee, that I am not as* the generality of *other men* are; but have always had the grace to withstand those vile temptations which conquer and enslave them; so that I am not like the *rapacious, unjust, adulterous* generation among whom I live, *or even like this* wretched *publican* that stands there at a distance, who probably is all this, and more:
12 Thou knowest, O Lord, that I am zealous in all the traditions of the elders; that in conformity to them *I fast twice a week*;[f] and with the greatest strictness *I pay tithes of all that I possess*, not excepting even the very herbs of my garden. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 23, and Luke xi. 42.) Thus the Pharisee offered his devotions, standing as near as he could to the court of the priests; confident in his own distinguished sanctity, and desirous to be observed by
13 others. *But the* poor humble *publican standing afar off*, in the court of the Gentiles, as unworthy to be numbered among God's people, and much more unworthy to appear in the presence of so holy a Deity, *would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven*, the habitation of the Divine holiness and glory: *but smote on his*

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:
10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote

[e] *As if he feared being polluted by touching him, &c.*] Thus Camero well explains this clause. Compare Isa. lxv. 5.

[f] *I fast twice a week.*] It has been observed by most commentators, that the Jews, especially the Pharisees, used generally to keep private fasts on Mondays and Thursdays, as the primitive Christians did on Wednesdays and Fridays; and our Lord had formerly reproved their ostentatious manner of doing it: Mat. vi. 16—18. See Drusius in loc.

upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

breast, in token of the bitterest remorse and deepest humiliation, *saying*, *O God*, I entreat thee *be merciful to me a* miserable *sinner*,[g] who acknowledge that I have nothing to hope but from the riches of thine unmerited and forfeited goodnes. SECT. CXXIX. Luke XVIII. 13

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Now, added our Lord, *I say unto you*, and I would have you diligently observe it, that *this* poor, humble, self-abasing *man went down to his house justified rather than the other*; and would have been far more acceptable in the sight of God than the Pharisee, if he had indeed been that moral upright man he pretended: even in that case his pride and confidence in his own righteousness would have blasted all; *for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*;[h] as nothing is more hateful to God than pride, and nothing more amiable than lowliness of mind. 14

IMPROVEMENT.

How hateful is the character of this *unjust judge, who neither feared God nor reverenced man*, but centered all his regards in himself! How hateful, and how contemptible, in any circumstance of life; especially in a *magistrate*, the guardian of the public interest, in comparison of which he ought to forget his own! Yet even he was prevailed upon by *importunity*; and our Lord mentions it to encourage the *fervor* of our *addresses* to the throne of grace. What then, is the blessed God, like this *unjust judge*, to be *wearied out* with a peal of words, and thereby weakly induced to do what would otherwise have been contrary to his designs? Far from us be so absurd and so impious a thought! Our condescending *Lord* only intended to intimate, that if the repeated *importunate cries* of the afflicted may at length prevail even on an *inhuman heart*, they will be much more regarded by a *righteous* and *merciful God*, who is always ready to bestow his favours when he sees we are prepared to receive them.—We may be sure that *God will vindicate his elect*: Ver. 2 5 1 6

[g] *A* miserable *sinner.*] It is very apparent, that the word *sinner* often signifies *an abandoned profligate*, or, as we commonly express it, *a wicked wretch*; and not merely one who has in some instances violated the divine law, which, alas, has been, and is the case with the best of men. See Psal. xxvi. 9; Amos ix. 10; Mat. ix. 10, 11; xxvii. 45; Luke vi. 32, 33; vii. 37, 39; xix. 7; John ix. 24, 31; and 1 Timothy i. 9.

[h] *Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased*; &c.] This appears to have been a favourite maxim with our Lord, since we find it repeated almost in these very words no less than *three* different times; not to mention a multitude of expressions in sense nearly equivalent. See Mat. xxiii. 12, and Luke xiv. 11. Compare note [k], sect. clvii.

SECT. CXXIX. Ver. 7. let this encourage them, though *the rod of the wicked* may for a while *rest on their back*; and let it intimidate the *proud oppressors* of the earth, who, in the midst of all their pomp and power, are so wretched as to have the prayers of God's people against them.

9 How instructive is this *parable* of the *publican* and *Pharisee!* and how well connected with the former, to teach us that *humility*, without which *repeated prayers* will be repeated insults and affronts to heaven! Let us not *trust in ourselves that we are righteous, and despise others*; but rather be severe to our own faults, and candid to theirs.

11 Behold this arrogant *Pharisee*, *standing apart* from the *publican*, but as near as he could to the seat of the Divine Majesty! And hear him boldly celebrating his own praises rather than those of his Maker! *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men.* We see a man may acknowledge it is the *grace of God* which *makes the difference* between him and others; and yet while he professes that *humbling doctrine* of the gospel may be blown up with *pride*: yea, he may nourish and express that *pride* 12 by the words in which he declares his *faith*. Mistaken creature! that imagined this *encomium* on himself was *a prayer*, and trusted in this defective *morality*, and these *ceremonies* of human device, while an utter stranger to real vital religion. Happier, a thousand times happier, the poor *publican*, when abasing himself in the dust; when *smiting on his breast*; when owning himself *a sinner*, and imploring the divine *mercy* as his only hope! *Lord*, we equally need it: may we with equal *humility* seek it! 13 May we habitually maintain those views of ourselves which may promote that *humility* so necessary in order to the acceptance of our addresses, and therefore to the happiness of our souls. And indeed, if in our approaches to God we can place our confidence in any *righteousness of our own*, whatever we may imagine of our own knowledge or holiness, we have need to be *taught again the first principles* of both, and are strangers to the essentials of religion.

SECT. CXXX.

Christ opens the eyes of a man who was born blind; and the sanhedrim examine strictly into the evidence of the miracle. John IX. 1—23.

JOHN IX. 1.

JOHN IX. 1. AND as *Jesus* passed

OUR Lord was now come to Jerusalem, at the feast of dedication, about the middle of December; [a] *and as he was passing along* through

[a] About the middle of December.] See John x. 22, and the note there, sect. cxxxiv. Notwithstanding all the pains which Mr. Whiston has taken to prove that the cure

by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.

the streets of that city, *he saw a* poor *man who had been blind from his birth*, that sat and asked relief from those that went by. SECT. CXXX. John IX. 2.

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

And his disciples, taking notice of the poor man's case, applied themselves to Jesus, and *asked him*, concerning it, *saying*, *Rabbi*, we desire thou wouldest tell us, *who* it was that *sinned* in so extraordinary and aggravated a manner as to occasion such a judgment? Had *this man* himself been guilty of some heinous crime, as some of our doctors suppose he might be, in a pre-existent state?[b] *or* had *his parents*, before his birth, committed some notorious sin? for we apprehend *that he was born blind*, as a punishment to himself, or them, or both.

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

But *Jesus*, waving the curiosity of the question, *answered*, *It is not because either this man, or his parents, have sinned* in such an extraordinary manner as you suppose; nor was the punishment of either the chief design of this dispensation of Providence; *but* the intent of it was, *that the* miraculous *works of God might be* remarkably *manifested in* restoring *him* to sight, as you will quickly see. For however the malice of the Jews may be irritated by it, *I must perform the works of him that sent me while it*

4 I must work the works of him that sent me while it is

of the blind man, of which we have an account here, happened several months before Christ discovered himself to him in the temple, and indeed at the preceding feast of tabernacles, I choose, with the generality of critics, to introduce it here; not merely that the thread of the story might not be interrupted, but because Mr. Whiston's reasons (in his Harmony, p. 385,) appear inconclusive. For I see not, but all here recorded might happen within the compass of two or three days at most, nay, perhaps, of one single day. And it seems much more probable, that παραγων [as he passed] might be used here without any immediate reference to παρηγεν, in the preceding verse, (John viii. ult. sect. cv.) than that when Christ was fleeing out of the temple in the hasty manner described there, his disciples as he passed away from his enemies, should put so nice a question to him (as in ver. 2,) or that he should stand still to discourse with them, and to perform such a cure in so leisurely a manner, as it is plain this was done.

[b] In a pre-existent state.] Dr. Lightfoot, (Hor. Heb. in loc.) shews, that some Rabbies have wildly fancied a child might sin in its mother's womb: but most commentators, with juster reason, agree, that this refers to the notion the Jews had of the transmigration of souls. They thought that if a man behaved himself amiss he was afterwards sent into another body, where he met with great calamities, and lived on much worse terms than before; whereas a more advantageous situation than the former was supposed the reward of distinguished virtue: a notion which they borrowed from the Pythagoreans; which seems to be hinted at by Josephus, and is plainly referred to, Wisd. viii. 19, 20. (Compare Mat. xiv. 2; xvi. 14.)—Perhaps the disciples might put this question on purpose to learn our Lord's sentiments on this subject of curious speculation; but he wisely declined an express decision of the matter, to fix on something more useful.

SECT. CXXX. John IX. 4.

is day, and the opportunity of dispatching it continues; for I well know that *the night is coming, in which no man can work:* I see death approaching, which, as it puts a period in general to human labours, so will close the scene of such miracles as these, and remove me from the converse and society of men. But *so long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world;* and, as a proof of the divine illumination I am capable of giving, I have often restored sight to the blind; and I will do it in this instance

day; the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 Now *when he had spoken thus*, that he might exercise the faith and obedience of the patient, and might shew that he could command efficacy on whatever means he should please to use, *he spat on the ground, and made clay with the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay:* 7 *And* then, for a farther trial of his resignation and submission, he *said to him*, Go, *wash at the pool of Siloam;*[c] *(which* word Siloam, *being interpreted* from the Hebrew, *signifies Sent*, and so bore some analogy to the character of Jesus, as sent of God.) *He therefore* presently complied with the direction, and *went away, and washed* as he was ordered, *and* had no sooner done it, but he *came* from the pool *seeing;* and not only found his sight given him, but his eyes were at once so remarkably strengthened, that he immediately could bear the light.[d]

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

7 And said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8 *The neighbours therefore, and they who had seen him before*, and known *that he was* always *blind, said* one to another, *Is not this he that sat* in the street, *and asked* [*charity*] of those

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

[c] *Wash at the pool of Siloam.*] Perhaps by this command our Lord intended to make the miracle so much the more taken notice of; for a crowd of people would naturally gather round him, to observe the event of so strange a prescription. And as it is exceeding probable, that the blind man had a guide to lead him, especially through the streets of so populous a city, he might naturally mention the errand they were going upon, and call those that saw him to a greater attention. Accordingly this miracle was afterwards talked of with particular regard: John xi. 37, sect. cxl. —As for the pool of Siloam, it was supplied from the fountain of that name which arose in the south-west part of Jerusalem. See note [c] on Luke xiii. 4, p. 127; and Reland. Palestin. p. 857.

[d] Could bear the light.] This is strongly intimated in the phrase, *he came seeing.* Compare note [b] sect. lxxxvi. Vol. I. p. 474.—Perhaps he had been taught by the example of Naaman not to despise the most improbable means when prescribed in the view of a miracle. Yet it is plain, he did not know this was Jesus of Nazareth yet, and so had no particular faith in him, (compare ver. 12;) which shews, by the way, that such a faith was not universally required as a condition of receiving a cure.

SECT. CXXX.

John IX. 9

who passed by? Whence is there such an astonishing alteration in him? And *some said, It is* assuredly *he; and others, It is* indeed very much *like him*, yet it cannot be the person himself:[e] [*but*] *he said*, and confidently averred, Truly *I am the* very *man.* *They therefore said to him*, *How* then *were thine eyes opened*, which we know to have been blind? Could any medicine have so strange an effect? And *he replied*, *a* certain *man*, who is *called Jesus*, and who is famous for many other extraordinary works, *made clay* by spitting on the ground, *and*, *having anointed mine eyes* with it, *said to me*, *Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash* there: *and* accordingly *I went and washed, and* immediately *received my sight*; and this is, in a few words, a true and exact account of this wonderful fact.

9 Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he.*

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

Then said they to him, *Where is he* that performed this, and gave thee such directions? And *he said*, *I do not know*; for I have never yet seen him, nor ever conversed with him, otherwise than as I just now told you.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

And *they brought him who had formerly been blind, to the Pharisees* in the grand sanhedrim, that he might be examined by them; that so, if there was any fraud in the matter, they might discover and expose it. *Now it was* on *the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay*[f] in the manner before related, *and opened his eyes*; which was a circumstance that some of these hypocritical rulers pretended to take great offence at. *The Pharisees therefore*, disposed to find all the fault they could, *asked him again*, *how* or by what means *he received his sight. And he said to them*, exactly as he had before declared to the people, *He* only *put clay upon mine eyes, and I* then, according to his command, went and *washed* at the neighbouring pool of Siloam, *and*, behold I *do* now *see* perfectly well.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that afore-time was blind.

14 And it was the sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him, how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

[e] *It is like him*, &c.] The circumstance of having received his sight would give him an air of spirit and cheerfulness, which would render him something unlike what he was before, and might occasion a little doubt to those who were not well acquainted with him; as B. Hall justly observes.

[f] *It was on the sabbath-day*, &c.] Dr. Lightfoot [in his Hor. Hebr. on ver. 6.] has shewn, that anointing the eyes on the sabbath-day with any kind of medicine was forbidden to the Jews by the tradition of the elders.

SECT. CXXX. John IX. 16.

Then said some of the Pharisees, This man, though apparently possessed of some extraordinary power, *is not*, to be sure, a messenger of *God*, nor can he perform these works by a Divine agency, *because he observeth not* the sacred rest of *the sabbath*, which the law of God so expressly enjoins. But *others* more wisely *said*, *How can a man that is a* notorious *sinner* and sabbath-breaker, as you suppose this man to be, *do such* great and beneficial *miracles*,[g] which wear all the marks of a divine original that can be imagined? *And there was a* warm debate and *division among them* on this important question; the few friends of Christ among them not failing to urge so great an advantage against the rest.[h]

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17 But, to prevent the offence that might be taken at their dispute, *they* turned and *said again to the blind man* (that is, to him who had been blind, and still was spoken of by that title,) *What sayest thou concerning him, since he hath*, as thou declarest, *opened thine eyes? And he* freely *said*, It is clear to me that *he is a* most illustrious *Prophet;* for surely otherwise he would have been unable to perform so great a miracle.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a Prophet.

18 *The Jews therefore* of this great council, being generally displeased with his reply, and yet unable to invalidate it if the miracle was allowed, *would not believe concerning him* on his own credit, *that he had* formerly *been blind, and had* now *received his sight;* but represented it as a confederacy between him and Jesus, by an easy fraud, to get the reputation of so extraordinary a cure: and in this view they went on roundly to censure it, *till they had called* in *the parents of the man, who* maintained that he *had* thus *received his sight*, that they might strictly
19 examine them on this question. *And they asked*

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is

[g] *Such* great and beneficial *miracles.*] This seems to intimate that they thought there were at least some miracles so glorious, and so benevolent, that no evil agent would have either inclination or power to perform them; and that they reckoned this in that number. The thought seems both rational and important, and is set in a very strong light by the learned Mr. Chapman, in his Eusebius, chap. ii.

[h] The few friends of Christ among them, &c.] If Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathea, both members of the sanhedrim, were now present, they would naturally distinguish themselves on this occasion; and Gamaliel too, on the principles he afterwards avowed (Acts v. 38, 39,) must have been on their side.

SECT. CXXX. John IX. 19.

this your son, who, ye say, was born blind? How then doth he now see?

them, saying, Is this indeed *your son, of whom* it is reported that *you say he was born blind?* Give us an account of the whole matter; and particularly tell us, if you are sure that he was blind from his birth, *how then doth he now see?*

20 His parents answered them, and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

20 *His parents answered them, and said, We* assuredly *know that this is our son; and* affirm it to be true *that he was born blind,* and hath continued so from his infancy:

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age, ask him, he shall speak for himself.

21 *But* as for this strange fact, *how he now sees, we know not; or who has opened his eyes, we know not* any more than he has told us, not being present when the cure was wrought: *he is* himself *of* a sufficient *age* to answer such a question; if you please therefore to *ask him, he will* undoubtedly *speak concerning himself,* and is best able to tell you his own story.

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

22 *These things his parents said* in this cautious manner, not that they had any doubt of the cure as wrought by Jesus, but *because they were afraid of the Jews: for the Jews,* in this their highest court, *had already agreed, that if any one should* shew such regard to Jesus of Nazareth as to *confess him to be Christ, he should* immediately *be* excommunicated and *cast out of the synagogue;*[1] a censure which was reckoned very infamous, and attended with many civil incapacities and penalties.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age, ask him.

23 Not knowing *therefore* but such interpretation might be put on their owning the truth of this miracle, *his parents* declined giving any particular testimony concerning it; and rather chose to refer them to their son, and *said, He is of age* sufficient to be heard as an evidence, and it will therefore be most proper that you should *ask* the particulars from *him.*

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 5. Oh that the zeal of our great Master might quicken us his too negligent servants! Still is he *the light of the world,* by his doctrines, precepts, and example. May our eyes by divine grace

[1] *If any one should confess him to be Christ,* &c.] Hence it appears, that though our Lord was cautious of professing himself to be the Christ in express terms, yet many understood the intimations he gave; and that most of his disciples by this time declared their faith in him under that character. It also farther appears from hence, that the parents, and indeed the sanhedrim, knew who it was that opened this man's eyes, though he himself was hitherto a stranger to him, and was not yet acquainted with the dignity of his person. Compare ver. 25, 36.

SECT. CXXX. Ver. 4. be opened to see, and our hearts be disposed to love and to follow this light! It was a governing maxim with him, and he meant it also for our admonition, *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, wherein no man can work.* We are sent into the world on an important errand, to *work out our own salvation*, and that of others: may we improve the *present day*; and so much the rather, as we see the *night* approaching! On some, the *shadows of the evening* are already drawing on; and as to others, their *sun may go down at noon.* Let us therefore, waving the *curiosity* of unprofitable specula-
2, 3 tions, apply ourselves seriously to the business of life, and zealously seize every opportunity of usefulness.

6, 7— Our *Lord*, as it should seem *unasked*, and by the person on whom it was wrought *unknown*, performed this important and extraordinary cure. And the *manner* in which he did it, is worthy of notice: He *anointed his eyes with clay*, and then commanded him *to wash.* Clay laid on the eye-lids might almost blind a man that had sight; but what could it do towards curing blindness? It reminds us, that God is no farther from the accomplishment of any purpose or event, when he works *with*, than *without means*; and that all the creatures are only *that* which his almighty operation makes them.

—7 The *blind man* believed, and received the immediate benefit of it. Had he reasoned, like *Naaman*, on the impropriety of the *means*, he had justly been left in darkness. Lord, may our proud hearts be subdued to the methods of thy recovering grace! And may we leave it to thee to choose how thou wilt bestow favours, which it is our highest interest on any terms to receive.

15, 17 18, 19 It must be a satisfaction to every true *Christian* to observe the curiosity and exactness with which these *Pharisees* inquired into the *miracles of Christ*, and how thoroughly they canvassed every circumstance of them. A truth like this need not fear any examination. Every new witness which they heard, confirmed the case, and confounded the obstinacy of their unbelief.—But surely the weakness of *the parents* was very pitiable, who, in the
20, 23 midst of the evidence and obligation of such a miracle, were more *afraid* of incurring a human sentence than of offending God, by failing to own so great a favour, and to confess the blessed Person by whom it was wrought. *The fear of man bringeth a snare* (Prov. xxix. 25); but they whose eyes *Christ* has opened in a spiritual sense, will see a glory and excellence in him, which will animate them boldly to bear their testimony to him, in defiance of all the censures which men can pass, or of all the penalties by which they can enforce them.

SECT. CXXXI.

The man who was born blind that had received his sight is a second time examined before the sanhedrim, who, provoked by the freedom of his replies, excommunicate him; but Jesus meets him, and declares himself to be the Son of God. John IX. 24—38.

JOHN IX. 24.

THEN again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

JOHN IX. 24.

NOW, as the sanhedrim were not able to discover any fraud in the miracle mentioned in the preceding section by examining the parents, *they therefore called a second time for the man who had been blind, and said to him Give glory to God*, by a free confession of the fraud, if there be any collusion or artifice in this affair;[a] or, if the cure was really wrought in the manner thou affirmest, acknowledge the power, sovereignty, and goodness, of the Divine Being in working by so unworthy an instrument; for *we* certainly *know that this* Jesus of Nazareth, the *man* of whom thou speakest, *is a* profligate *sinner*,[b] and deserves public punishment rather than esteem.

SECT. CXXXI. John IX. 24

25 He answered and said, Whether, he be a sinner, *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.

Then answered he and said, If he be a sinner, I know not any thing of it, having no personal acquaintance with him; but *one thing I* certainly *know*, and will stand to the truth of it, *that whereas I was blind*, even from my birth, *I now see* perfectly well, and owe my sight to the very person whom you condemn. 25

[a] *Give Glory to God*, by a free confession of the fraud, &c.] As it is greatly for the honour of the Divine omniscience and providence, that persons who are guilty of crimes not fully proved against them should freely confess them, and not presume, against the dictates of conscience, to maintain their own innocence; there is a great propriety in the phrase taken in this sense: (compare Josh. vii. 19, and Rev. xi. 13.) Yet some have taken it as a general adjuration by the glorious name of God; (as 1 Kings xxii. 16; 2 Chron. xviii. 15; and Mat. xxvi. 63.)—The words also admit another sense, which I have comprehended in the paraphrase; but I prefer the former.

[b] *This man is a sinner.*] I cannot, with Mr. Locke (Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 28.) imagine this any proof of a tradition among the Jews that the Messiah should be perfectly *free from sin*; but rather conclude, that sinner here, as in ver. 16. signifies a notoriously wicked man. It was certain, from the principles of their sacred writings, that a person not entirely sinless might perform very illustrious miracles. But how severe an insult was here on the character of our Redeemer, to be pronounced a known scandalous sinner by this high court of judicature! An infamy which has seldom, in any civilized country, fallen on any person not legally convicted.

SECT. CXXXI

John IX. 26

But they again said to him, hoping that, in some minute circumstance at least, he might contradict his former account, and give them some advantage against him, Tell us once more, as particularly as thou canst, *what did he unto thee?* and *how did he open thine eyes?*

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 And as the man perceived that they intended only to ensnare him, *he answered them* eagerly, *I have told you already, and ye have not regarded* what I said, nor would at all believe me: *why would you* desire to *hear it again? Would you also become his disciples,* as many have lately done, and some, perhaps, on occasion of this miracle which he has performed on me?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear; wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 The Pharisees *then* were filled with indignation, and were so greatly exasperated at what appeared to them so insolent a speech, that *they reviled him* in very opprobious language, *and said, Thou art* indeed *this fellow's disciple,* as many of the herd of ignorant people are; *but* we would have thee to know that we scorn the imputation, for *we are the disciples of Moses,*[c] and are too firmly attached to that great and holy prophet, to regard such a deceiver as this.

29 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29 *We* well *know that God spake to Moses,*[d] and gave the most ample evidence of sending him with a divine commission; *but as for this man, we know not from whence he is,* nor can we perceive any satisfactory credentials of his bringing any message from God to us.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

30 But not discouraged by their unjust reflections, *the man replied* with a becoming freedom of spirit, *and said unto them, Why, in this respect, it is strange that you know not from whence he is, and yet* it is plain, that *he has opened mine* 31 *eyes. Now we* all *know* in general *that God heareth not sinners,* and that persons of infamous

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not

[c] *We are the disciples of Moses.*] Hereby they craftily, but most maliciously and falsely, insinuated that there was such an opposition between Moses and Jesus, that it was impossible for the same persons to be the disciples of both.

[d] *We know that God spake to Moses.*] Their partiality here was inexcusable; for if they believed the mission of Moses, on the evidence of miracles, credibly attested indeed, but performed two thousand years before they were born; it was much more reasonable, on their own principles, to believe the mission of Jesus on at least equal miracles, wrought daily among them, when they might in many instances have been eye-witnesses to the facts; and one of which, notwithstanding all their malice, they were here compelled to own, or at least found themselves utterly unable to disprove.

sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him he heareth.

characters and immoral lives cannot expect the Divine acceptance in any common petition which they offer, much less for the performance of a miracle; *but if any man be* truly *devout, and* faithfully *do his will, him* indeed *he heareth* with a favourable regard: when therefore God is found to hear a man in such an extraordinary instance as this, there seems the greatest reason to believe he is a person whose temper and character are approved by him. And this is plainly an extraordinary instance; for, *from the beginning of the world it was never heard that any man opened the eyes of one, who,* like me, *was born blind.* It is surprising, therefore, that you, who allow that Moses was a prophet, on the authority of his miracles, should in this case judge so hardly of my deliverer, whoever he be. But every unprejudiced person may easily see that *if this man were not* sent *of God, he could do nothing* of this kind.

SECT. CXXXI. John IX. 31

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

32

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

33

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

And, not being able to endure so plain and forcible a reproof, which even stung them to the heart, *they answered and said to him,* with great hatred and scorn, Thou vile presumptuous wretch, *thou wast entirely born in sins,* and didst bring into the world with thee most evident tokens of Divine wrath and vengeance; *and dost thou* insolently take upon thee to *teach us,* the guides of the national faith, and members of the supreme court of ecclesiastical judicature? We shall find out a way to correct this arrogance. *And* immediately *they cast him out* of the synagogue, passing a solemn sentence of excommunication upon him, though there was no shadow of proof that he had deserved it.

34

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

Now *Jesus* quickly *heard* of their arbitrary proceedings, *that they had* thus passed sentence on the poor man, and had *cast him out* for his sake; *and, finding him* soon after, *he said to him* privately, *Dost thou believe on the Son of God,* the great expected Messiah?

35

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

He answered and said, Sir, who is he, that I may believe on him? I know that such a glorious Person is expected; and if he be already come, tell me but who he is, and where I may meet with him, and I am ready to express a due regard to him who shall be pointed out to me under that honourable and important character.

36

SECT. CXXXI. John IX. 37

Then Jesus, to encourage him under what he was now suffering on his account, *said to him*, with a degree of freedom which was very unusual,[e] Thou hast no need of going far to seek him; for *thou hast both* already *seen him*, and had experience of his power and goodness; it was he that miraculously opened thine eyes, *and* indeed it is even *he that is* now *talking with thee*, who *is that very Person.*

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 *And*, immediately yielding to that convincing argument which arose from what he had himself experienced of his almighty power, *he said, Lord, I* most readily *believe* that thou art he, and humbly prostrate myself before thee, to render thee due homage as such. *And*, falling down at his feet, *he worshipped him.*

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 24—27 So little does *truth* fear repeated examinations; and thus does it, after every trial, *come forth like* pure *gold*, out of the furnace. So did this *miracle of Christ* appear to these subtle adversaries; so will the *Christian cause* appear to all who will diligently search into its evidence.

28, 29 Who can forbear wondering at the obstinacy of these *Pharisees*; and, on the same principles, at that of the present *Jews*, who, while they acknowledge that *God spake by Moses*, because he wrought *miracles*, will not, on the evidence of yet more various and glorious *miracles*,[f] and those attested beyond all contradiction, acknowledge the authority of the *Son of God* himself?

30 But we see this poor illiterate creature (for such he undoubtedly was,) with the advantage of *truth* on his side, baffles all the sophistry of his most learned antagonists. *Great is the truth, and it will prevail.* Great is *this truth*, so fundamental to the gospel, that *Jesus is the Son of God*: and *this* also, which is so important

31 to natural religion and revealed, that *God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, him he hears,*

[e] With a degree of freedom very unusual.] We have formerly observed the wise caution of Jesus on this head. See sect. xxix. note [r], Vol. I. p. 173.—The freedom here used may be accounted for by considering the extraordinary circumstances of the case; this being the first instance in which any one had incurred the great inconveniencies attending a sentence of excommunication out of zeal for the honour of Christ. No doubt this passed privately between our Lord and this good man, though presently after others joined the conversation, as we observe in the beginning of the next section.

[f] More various and glorious miracles.] A beautiful parallel between the miracles of Moses and Christ is drawn by Orobio on the one hand, and Limborch on the other. Limb. Collat. cum Judæo, Script. iii. Quest. 4, N° 3, p. 131, *& seq.* and Resp. ad Script. iii. p. 151, *& seq.*

and most favourably regards. May we be truly *devout*, and add to our devotion an obedient regard to the Divine will, and *the eyes of the Lord will be upon us, and his ears be open to our cry!* (Psal. xxxiv. 15.) Then, being favourably owned of *God*, we shall have no reason to fear the censures of *men*. If they *cast us out*, *Christ* will receive us, and perhaps *reveal himself to us* with more *freedom*, in proportion to the *injuries* we sustain from them. SECT. CXXXI. Ver. 34, 35, 37

SECT. CXXXII.

Christ admonishes the Pharisees of their danger; and represents himself as the door of the sheepfold through which men must necessarily enter, if they desire their own salvation, or that of others committed to their care. John IX. 39, *to the end;* X. 1—10.

JOHN IX. 39.

JOHN IX. 39. AND Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world: that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind.

SECT. CXXXII. John IX. 39

WHILE Jesus stood talking with the blind man who had received his sight, several people, who were then entering into the temple, knowing them both, and desirous to hear what passed, gathered together about them: *and Jesus said*, so that they all might hear him, You may see in this man, and in what has happened in relation to him, an illustration of the effects which my appearance is to produce: for *I am come into this world for judgment* as well as mercy; *that*, on the one hand, *they who see not, might see*, or that the ignorant souls, who are willing to be instructed, might learn Divine knowledge; *and*, on the other hand, *that they who see, may be made blind*; that such as are proudly conceited of their own science and wisdom, may either be humbled or exposed; and they who wilfully stand out, and harden their hearts against my instructions, may bring upon themselves yet greater darkness.

40 And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him, heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

40 *And* [*some*] *of the Pharisees, who were* then present *with him, heard these things, and* apprehending that he glanced at them, *said to him, Are we also blind?* and dost thou mean to insinuate any thing of that kind? If thou dost, speak plainly. Now this they said, hoping thereby to draw him into some dangerous reflection on the sanhedrim, who had lately passed

SECT. CXXXII

their censure on the man whose eyes he had opened.

John IX. 41

Jesus said to them, If you were indeed *blind,* and laboured under unavoidable ignorance, *you would not* then *have* any *sin* in comparison of what you now have:[a] *but now you say, Surely we see* much more clearly than the rest of mankind, *therefore your sin abides* upon you with greater aggravation: and this conceit which you have of your own knowledge hinders conviction, and prevents the first entrance of instruction into your minds.

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

John X. 1

Nevertheless, whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, I will for a while longer continue my admonitions; and therefore, *verily, verily, I say unto you* who call yourselves the shepherds of the people, That *he who enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other* private *way*, whatever be the character he may assume, *the same is* to be looked upon as no better than *a thief and a robber. But he that comes in at the door* of the sheepfold *is the* true *shepherd of the sheep*; and such a one will always choose to enter in by that which is the regular appointed way. *To him*, as soon as he approaches, *the door-keeper opens* the fold;[b] *and the sheep* themselves *hear his voice* with regard; *and he* is well acquainted with each of

JOHN X. 1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice:

[a] *If you were* indeed *blind, you would not have* any *sin*, &c.] Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p 326.) understands this of *corporeal blindness*; as if our Lord had said, "It is a great aggravation of your perverseness, that you know by experience "the difference between blindness and "sight, which might convince you of the "importance of such a miracle, and of "the divine power by which it is "wrought."—But the following words, *But now you say, We see*, suit much better with the sense given in the paraphrase.

[b] *The door-keeper opens* the fold.] Grotius does not attempt the accommodation of this circumstance: Mr. Cradock interprets it of the *Holy Ghost*; and Dr. Whitby of *God the Father*, as giving free admission to those teachers who maintained a due regard to Christ: an interpretation which seems much more reasonable than to refer it (as some do,) to ministers.—It is suggested by Sir Isaac Newton, that, as these words were spoken near the temple, where sheep were kept in folds to be sold for sacrifices, Christ here alludes to what was peculiar in those folds; that, as they were kept locked, they not only excluded the thief, but the shepherd, till the door-keeper opened them. (See Newton on Proph. p. 148. But I cannot think, whatever occasion Christ might take from the sight of sheep to represent his people under that image, and himself as a Shepherd, he would describe them like sheep shut up in a pen to be sold for sacrifice: nor does the shepherd's leading them out, &c. agree with this circumstance. In countries where there were so many savage beasts, it might be ordinarily necessary to have the folds better secured than among us; and the chief shepherd might often leave a servant to watch them while thus shut up, and come himself to lead them out to pasture in a morning.

and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

them, insomuch that he *calls* each of *his own* *sheep by name*,[c] *and leads them out* to pasture. *And when he* thus *puts forth his own sheep* from the fold, *he* himself *goes before them* to guide them to good pastures, and to defend them from any danger which may occur; *and the sheep* cheerfully *follow him; for they* well *know his voice*, being daily accustomed to it. *But if a stranger* come to lead them out, *they will not follow* him; *but*, on the contrary, they *will flee* away *from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.* SECT. CXXXII. John X. 4, 5

This short *parable Jesus spake unto them; but they did not understand what it was that he said to them*, but were quite at a loss to conjecture his meaning; though his intent in describing the character of the good Shepherd was plainly to shew how far the Pharisees, who assume the name, were from answering it; and to warn the true sheep, or persons of real integrity and simplicity, of the danger of being blindly governed and guided by them. 6

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

Then Jesus, to clear up what was most obscure in his former discourse, *said to them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you*, and solemnly assure you, *that*, however you neglect me, *I am the door of the sheep*,[d] and it is only by authority derived from me that the people of God are to be taught and fed. 7

8 All that ever came before me are

All that ever came before me assuming the Messiah's character, or setting up for a despotic authority in the church, and teaching other methods of salvation than by me,[e] *are thieves and robbers*, persons of very 8

[c] *Calls his own sheep by name.*] Dr. Hammond justly infers from hence, that the eastern shepherds, at least those of Judea, gave particular names to their sheep, as most men do to their dogs and horses.—Their custom also was to lead the sheep, playing on some musical instrument.

[d] *I am the door*, &c.] It would be very impertinent to run a long parallel here between Christ and a door. The resemblance plainly centers in this one circumstance; that as a man must observe and pass through the door, in order to his making a regular and unsuspected entrance into a sheepfold; so he must maintain a proper regard to Christ, in order to his being a true teacher in the church, and must pass (as it were) through him, or by his authority, into his office. It is by a simile very near resembling this, that Christ elsewhere calls himself the way. John xiv. 6, sect. clxxiii

[e] *All that ever came before me*, &c.] If it could be shewn, by any proper authority, that προ-ειμι ever signifies *in neglect of me*, or προ δυρας; *passing by a door*, I should with Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 327), prefer that rendering to any other: but as this does not appear, it is evident that the words must be understood with the limitation added in the paraphrase; for otherwise they would imply such a reflection on Moses and the prophets as we know our Lord could never intend.

SECT. CXXXII.

bad designs, who had no warrant from above for what they did; and, whatsoever their pretences were, their administration has a fatal tendency to make havock of the souls they should watch and feed; *but the* true *sheep*, or those who are sincere and well-disposed persons, *have not heard them*, so as to relish and regard their doctrine. I therefore repeat it again, as a most important truth, That *I* myself *am the door;* and *if any one enter in by me*, and acknowledge my authority, *he shall be*, like a sheep in his fold, *safe* from the invasion of what might injure and destroy him; *and shall go in and out* under my care and guidance, *and* shall still *find* good *pasture;* that is, in consequence of his regard to me, and the enjoyment of communion with me, his soul shall be fed and nourished with true doctrine, and shall obtain substantial happiness. For whereas *the thief only comes that he may steal, and kill, and destroy; I am come* for the benefit of all my sheep, *that they may have* true *life, and that* at length *they may have it* yet *more abundantly;*[f] a most plentiful provision being made for their everlasting comfort and happiness, even far beyond what has ever been known before.

John X. 8.

9

10

thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

IMPROVEMENT.

John ix. 39

LET us hear with an holy awe on our spirits, that the *Lord Jesus Christ came into the world for* purposes of *judgment* as well as of *mercy;* and make it our humble prayer, that we may be *enlightened* by him, and not sealed up under aggravated *darkness*, as a punishment for our obstinacy and impenitence; for then all the means of knowledge which we have so basely perverted, will rise up to condemn us.

John x. 7.

Let *Christ* be regarded by us as *the door* from whom all true teachers derive their authority, and to whom they direct their administrations: and let it be our care that we *enter by this door.* Let inferior *shepherds* learn their duty, so plainly suggested here:

Perhaps he might refer to such persons as Judas of Galilee, or Theudas, who had been the occasion of destruction to their followers. See Acts v. 36. 37.

[f] *That they may have it more abundantly.*] To refer this latter clause, at least ultimately, to the provision which Christ has made for the future and eternal happiness of all his people, seems best to suit the other parts of this discourse, as well as the genius of the whole Christian dispensation. Perhaps the word περισσον may intimate how much this provision exceeded that made by Moses.

Let them learn to know *their sheep*, and take as particular notice as they can of each single person committed to their care; and let them *go before them* in all the paths of duty: for what could the greatest enemy to the flock do worse, than to lead them by example into the paths of destruction? SECT. CXXXII. Ver. 3.

Happy souls, who are *entered in* by this gate! Their safety, 9
their comfort, is secure; they enjoy a holy liberty and plenty, and *going in and coming out, they find pasture.* If we are strangers to that entertainment and refreshment which arises from ordinances (those *green pastures* which *Christ* has provided for *his sheep* in the wilderness), we have a great deal of reason to fear that we belong not to his flock. *He came that his sheep* 10
might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly; that greater provision might be made for their instruction and consolation now, till they are brought to those *better pastures* he intends for them above. May his grace prepare us for them! and his hand will certainly conduct us to them; nor need we fear the darkest passage in our way.

SECT. CXXXIII.

Christ describes himself as the good Shepherd, who will lay down his life for the sheep. John X. 11—21.

JOHN X. 11.

I Am the good Shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

JOHN X. 11.

OUR Lord, having thus represented himself as the door of the sheep, and intimated the regards to be maintained towards him, particularly by those that professed themselves teachers of others, now changed the similitude, and said, I may also very properly add, that *I am* myself, by way of eminence, *the good Shepherd*,[a] the Person frequently foretold in Scripture under that character (Isa. xl. 11; Ezek. xxxiv. 23; xxxvii. 24; and Mic. v. 4); and I must fully answer it in all its branches; especially in this, that as *the good shepherd* on occasion *layeth down his* very *life for the* defence of his *sheep*, and will expose himself to any danger for their safety SECT. CXXXIII. John X. 11.

[a] *I am the good Shepherd.*] Lamy (in his Harmony. p. 339,) very justly supposes that there might be some allusion here to Isa. xl. 11. But nothing can be more precarious than the argument he seems to draw from hence, for placing this discourse at the feast of tabernacles, even though it should be allowed that the xl^th^ of Isaiah was read in the synagogue at that time of the year: for it is certain, our Lord does not confine himself to the lesson for the day in his quotations from scripture, or his allusions to it.

SECT. CXXXIII

(compare 1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35), I not only expose, but sacrifice, my life for the good of my people.

John X. 12.

The hireling indeed, who is not the true *shepherd*, and *whose own* property *the sheep are not*, as soon as he is apprehensive of approaching danger, and *sees the wolf*, for instance, or some other savage beast *coming*, immediately regarding nothing but his own safety, is only careful to secure himself, *and leaves the sheep and flees away; and* so *the wolf*, meeting with no resistance, *seizes* on some of *them, and disperses the* 13 rest of the *sheep*. *Now the hireling flees* on such an occasion, *because he is an hireling, and is not concerned about* the safety of *the sheep*, but takes the work upon him merely for his own gain, and the wages he is to receive; and thus basely will those teachers act in a time of danger, who undertake the office merely in regard to their own secular advantage.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 But *I am the good Shepherd*, who have a true affection for my sheep, and am above the influence of all such mean and selfish views: and such is the relation that there is between us, and such the love we have to one another, that *I know* and acknowledge *my* [*sheep*], and take the kindest and most tender care of them: *and* I *am* also *known*, acknowledged, and confided in, 15 *by mine*: So that we mutually are dear unto each other; and *even as the Father knoweth me*, and owns his affection and regard to me, by the sure tokens of his presence and approbation; *and I* also *know*, or acknowledge and honour *the Father*, in the delight with which I do his will; so the affection is reciprocal between me and my sheep: *and* as it is in love to them, as well as with an ultimate view to his appointment and his glory, that *I lay down my life for the sheep* he has given me, so also do my sheep acknowledge and confide in me, and so do I protect and patronize them.

14 I am the good Shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 *And* I would farther observe to you, as a point of great importance, that *I have other sheep which are not of this fold*[b] (meaning thereby the

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.

[b] *I have other sheep, which are not of this fold.*] There seems no reason, with Wolfius, to understand this of Jews living out of the land of Canaan, who could

them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold. *and* one Shepherd.

elect of God among the Gentiles;) *them also* SECT. *must I* at length *bring* in; *and* I know that *they* CXXXIII. *will hear* and obey *my voice*, notwithstanding that ignorance, vice, and misery, in which they are now involved; *and* so, all being incorporated into one society, of which I am the Head, the Governor, and Guardian, *there shall be one sheepfold*, [*and*] *one Shepherd.* John X. 16

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

And *for this reason* more especially *does the* 17 *Father love me*, and approves it as an act of eminent duty and love to him, *because I* am come with this design into the world, to *lay down my life* for the redemption of my sheep, who are dear to him as well as to me, *that I may take it again* and possess it for ever, to be employed for his glory and for the happiness of my people. For though I am shortly to die by the hands 18 of most cruel enemies, yet *no one* deprives me of my life, or *takes it from me* against my will; for I have every moment a power to rescue myself at pleasure, and could even with mine expiring breath command immediate deliverance; *but* I will manifestly shew that *I lay it down of myself*, and voluntarily relinquish my body, sooner than my soul would in a course of nature have been dislodged from it:[c] and this in me will be a very regular, though wonderful act; for, as I have life in myself (John v. 26,) *I have* full *power* and authority thus *to lay it down* when I shall think fit;[d] *and I have* also *power to resume it* at pleasure, by entering into and quickening my body again. And indeed *this commandment I have received of my Father*, and shall ere long fulfil the charge in both its branches.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

19 There was a di- When our Lord uttered these remarkable ex- 19

not with such propriety be said not to belong to the fold of Israel. The incorporating the Gentiles into one church with the Jews, was indeed a grand event, worthy such particular notice: and it deserves our remark, that they are here called *the sheep of Christ*, even while they were yet in ignorance and idolatry, as he intended at length to bring them home.

[c] Voluntarily relinquish my body, &c.] That our Lord did so, evidently appeared from the strong cry he sent forth just before his death, with which the centurion was reasonably so much impressed. See Luke xxiii. 45, 47. and Mark xv. 39, sect. cxci.

[d] Full *power* and authority *to lay it down*, &c.] This the word ἐξουσιαν expresses, and the manner of Christ's death abundantly proved it: and as no reasonable objection can be made to the equity and wisdom of the Divine Being in giving Christ such a power, so the use he made of it (as we may farther shew elsewhere) is truly admirable. See note [l] on Luke xxiii. 46, sect. cxci.

SECT. CXXX. John X. 20.

pressions *there was a division therefore again among the Jews* (as there had been before, chap. vii. 43, sect. ci. and ix. 16, sect. cxxx.) especially *on account of these* last *words*. *And many of them said, He has* certainly *a demon* dwelling in him, *and*, by the operation of that evil spirit, *is* apparently *distracted* with one of the most malignant kinds of lunacy; *why* then *do you* give yourselves the trouble to *hear him* while he goes on in such extravagant absurdities?

vision therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 But *others* much more rationally *said*, *These are not* by any means *the words of a demoniac*, or a lunatic; for there is the greatest consistence and energy in them; and besides, *could a demon* that made a man mad, *open the eyes of the blind*, as it is plain this man has often and very lately done? It is rather madness to imagine that an evil spirit has such power, or that he would employ it to such benevolent purposes.

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil: can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

IMPROVEMENT

Ver. 20 THERE is not, perhaps, any where to be found a greater instance of the force of *prejudice* than in these perverse *Jews*, who censured *Christ* as *a lunatic* and *a demoniac* for one of the gravest and most excellent speeches that was ever delivered. Let us review it with all due attention and regard.

11 Let us consider *Christ* as the *good Shepherd*, and humbly commit our souls to him, as ever we desire they should be safe and happy. We have known his kind regards to the flock in
15 exposing and *laying down his life for them*. And he hath not *laid it down* in vain. Delightful thought! Our compassionate *Shepherd*, even when the *sword of the Lord* was *awakened* to *smite him*, has not so fallen as to rise no more; but as in this
18 great and good work he voluntarily *laid down*, so he has also *reassumed his life*; and still bears on his heart the same concern for his flock, and uses his renewed life and exalted dignity for their security and happiness.

15 Let us humbly *acknowledge him* as *acknowledged by the Father*: let us courageously and gratefully own him, and be ready to *lay down our lives* also *for him*. We are those *other sheep*, of
16 whom he spake, *who were not* originally *of the fold*, but by his grace are now *brought in* to the great *Shepherd and Bishop of Souls*. Let us pray that the boundaries of *his fold* may be still more extended, and the whole number of his elect accomplished; that all the flock may at length appear together, and may be conducted by him to the regions of that immortal life which he determines to give it.

In the mean time, let us maintain all proper regards to him, and especially the most cheerful confidence in his care; repeating with evangelical views, and so with a peculiar sublimity of sense, those words of *David* as our own, (Psal. xxiii. 1—4,) *The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want: he maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters: he restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake: yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.* SECT. CXXXIII. Ver. 14.

SECT. CXXXIV.

Christ, discoursing of his union with the Father, is charged with blasphemy; and, being assaulted by the Jews, retires beyond Jordan. John X. 22, *to the end.*

JOHN X. 22.

JOHN X. 22. AND it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

NOW it may be proper to observe, that the time when these discourses were delivered by our Lord, *was the feast of dedication*,* which was observed *at Jerusalem* in memorial of the purification of the temple after it had been polluted by the idolatries and impieties of Antiochus; *and* consequently *it was winter.* *And* to shelter himself from the inclemencies of the weather, *Jesus was* then *walking in* the covered walk that went round *the temple*, and was now *in* that part of it which was called *Solomon's porch.*[b] SECT. CXXXIV. John X. 22.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch.

* *The feast of dedication.*] As it is expressly said this feast was in winter, it is plain it could not be observed in remembrance of the dedication of Solomon's temple, which was just after harvest, (1 Kings viii. 2,) nor that of Nehemiah's, which was in the spring, (Ezra vi. 15, 16;) but the feast here intended must be that instituted by Judas Maccabæus on his having purified the temple and altar from the pollutions and idolatries of Antiochus Epiphanes. This was celebrated every year for eight days successively, in the month of December, (1 Mac. iv. 52, 59;) and is mentioned by Josephus as a festival to which great regard was paid in his time. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 7, (al. 11,) § 6, 7, and Selden. de Syned. lib. iii. cap. 13, § 7.

[b] *Solomon's porch.*] Josephus informs us, (Antiq. lib. viii. cap. iii. (al. 2,) § 2, 9, and lib. xx. cap. 9, (al. 8,) § 7,) that Solomon, when he built the temple (finding the area of Mount Zion too small to answer his magnificent plan,) filled up a part of the adjacent valley, and built an outward portico over it towards the east. This was a most noble structure, supported by a wall 400 cubits high, and consisting of stones of a vast bulk, each stone (as it is said) being twenty cubits long, and six cubits high. And Josephus speaks of it as continuing even to the time of Albinus and Agrippa, which was several years after the death of Christ. This is called Solomon's porch, Acts iii. 11, and v. 12.

SECT. CXXXIV. John X. 24.

Then several of *the Jews surrounded him, and said unto him, How long dost thou hold us in* an anxious and uneasy *suspense? If thou art* indeed *the Messiah, tell us* so *plainly* and expressly: which they said with a malicious design to ensnare and accuse him.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 And *Jesus answered them, I have* in effect *told you* over and over,[c] *yet you believe* me *not;* and, had I offered nothing more, *the works which I do in my Father's name* sufficiently declare it, as it is clearly to be seen, that *they bear witness of me* in a language which you would easily understand if you were to judge impartially. *But you do not believe, because you are not* persons of such simplicity and sincerity as I described under the character *of my sheep.* For, *as I said unto you* but just now, (ver. 4, 14, 16,) *My sheep hear my voice, and I know* and take care of *them; and they,* like sheep accustomed to their shepherd, acknowledge and *follow me. And* the consequence of that will be such as would make it well worth your while to lay aside all these prejudices, and to join with them: for *I give unto them* an invaluable blessing, even *eternal life; and* guard them with such almighty power and constant care, that *they shall never perish, neither shall any* enemy, be he ever so subtile, or ever so outrageous, be able to *pluck them out of my hand,*[d] or injure them while they remain in it. Nor indeed is it possible that any should; for *my Father who gave* [*them*] *to me* on purpose that I might redeem and save them, *is* confessedly *greater than all; and* therefore they must needs be safe, as *none is able to pluck* [*them*] *out of my Father's hand.* Now it is a most certain truth, that *I and the Father are*

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

28 And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all: and none is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

30 I and *my* Father are one.

[c] *I have* in effect *told you* over and over.] What he had just been saying of himself, in the preceding verses, as the great Shepherd, was in some sense equivalent to a declaration of his being the Messiah.—I mention that discourse as what had just been delivered, because I think it most natural to explain the 22d verse as referring to what was said before, and not merely to what follows: for else the evangelist would probably have said, after these things was the feast of dedication. Compare John v. 1; vi. 4; and xi. 1, 2.

[d] *Neither shall any* enemy *pluck them,* &c.] This is the plain import and energy of the original, (και αρπασει τις αυτα,) which is greatly enervated by adding the word *man* in the translation, as the authors of our English version have frequently done. (Compare Mat. xi. 27; Mark xiii. 5; and Jam. i. 13.) The sheep of Christ are exposed to so great danger from the infernal lion, (1 Pet. v. 8,) that I doubt not but this text most eminently refers to the care of their Shepherd to guard them from his assaults.

one:[e] and the union between us is so strict and intimate, in nature as well as in affection and design, that his almighty power is mine, to be employed for the defence of my sheep; and no one can deprive them of eternal life without prevailing against him as well as me. SECT. CXXXIV John X. 30.

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

31 *Then the Jews,* transported with rage, *took up* some of the *stones* which lay in the court of the temple, where they were still repairing some of the buildings, and armed themselves with them *again,* as they had formerly done, (John viii. 59, p. 79.) in order *to stone him.*

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

32 But *Jesus,* with his usual mildness and strength of reason, *answered them, I have shewed you many good works from my Father;* and *for which of these works do you* go about to *stone me?* or what have I ever done among you but acts of beneficence and kindness?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself god.

33 *The Jews replying, said unto him,* Whatever thy other works have been, it is very apparent, from what has just now passed, that *we do not stone thee for a good work, but for the* most detestable *blasphemy; even because thou, being* only *a* wretched, mortal, sinful *man, makest thyself God;* pretending to be one with him in so extraordinary a manner, that his omnipotence and other divine perfections are thine.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods!

34 *Jesus,* not judging it proper at that time to bring the sublime doctrine of his deity into farther debate, *answered them, Is it not written in your law,* or in those sacred books which you own to be of divine original (Psal. lxxxii. 6,) where it is plain the persons that are spoken of are princes and magistrates, "*I* have *said, Ye* "*are gods*"; and all of you are children of the "Most High?" Now *if* the Psalmist thus applied this character, and it appears *he called them gods, to whom the word of God* then *came,*[f]

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came,

[e] *I and the Father are one.*] If we attend, not only to the obvious meaning of these words in comparison with other passages of Scripture, but to the connection of this celebrated text, it so plainly demonstrates the Deity of our blessed Redeemer that I think it may be left to speak for itself, without any laboured comment.—How widely different that sense is, in which Christians are said to be one with God, (John xvii. 21.) will sufficiently appear by considering how flagrantly absurd and blasphemous it would be, to draw that inference from their union with God which Christ does from his.

[f] *To whom the word of God came.*] I apprehend the *coming of the word of God to them,* which is here mentioned, refers to the message then delivered to them in the

SECT. CXXXIV

merely with regard to that office which by divine designation they bore. (*and* certainly *the scripture cannot be broken*, nor can you, with any shew of reason, pretend to censure the propriety of those expressions which a divinely inspired writer has used;) How is it then that you are so offended now? or how *do you* pretend to *say concerning him whom the Father hath* so solemnly *sanctified*, or set apart to this great work in his eternal councils, *and* whom he at length has *sent into the world* under such an exalted character, *thou blasphemest; because I said I am the Son of God?* when you allow there is a sense in which even oppressive magistrates may be honoured with such a title.[z]

and the scripture cannot be broken:

John X. 35.

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

And when I claim this character, and speak so highly of myself, I do not expect to be credited merely on my own affirmation; *if I do not the works of my Father*, such glorious works as could not be performed by any but a divine agent, *believe me not. But if* it be apparent that *I do* such works, *though you believe not me*, and are regardless of my own testimony in the case; yet at least *believe the* mighty *works* that I perform; and let the evidence of these remove the prejudices you have entertained, *that ye may know and believe, that the Father* [*is*] *in me, and I in him*, by such a union as abundantly justifies the expression which seems to give you such peculiar offence.

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father *is* in me, and I in him.

Then, though they knew not what to answer

39 Therefore they

name of God, rather than, in the general, to their receiving a commission from him: but the difference is not very material.

[z] When you allow—magistrates, &c.] A late learned and pious paraphrast apprehends, that our Lord here vindicates his claim to supreme divinity, by pleading that the Jewish rulers are called gods, not in a general regard to their office as rulers, but as types of the Messiah, the great Sovereign of the church, who (as it is expressed at the close of this lxxxii. psalm,) was to *inherit all nations*. But not to urge that it seems improbable that such wicked magistrates as are there spoken of should be described as types of Christ, this explication seems to imply, that every person whose office was typical of the Messiah might be called a god; and, on the other hand, that a creature's being called by that name would intimate, that he was a typical person: the consequences of which I am sure that worthy writer would abhor. (Compare 2 Cor. iv. 4.) I think myself therefore obliged to acquiesce in that plain and natural sense of the passage which the generality of commentators, both ancient and modern, have given:—Jesus was charged here by the Jews with ascribing divinity to his human nature; and, in reply to this, he shews that calling himself the Son of God did not imply that; and that his works proved such an union of the human nature with the divine, as he had before asserted, than which no answer could have been more wise and pertinent.

sought again to take him : but he escaped out of their hand,

him, the Jews were so enraged against him, that *they sought again to seize him*, that they might accuse him of blasphemy before the sanhedrim: *but he* withdrew himself, as he had done before, in an extraordinary manner, and so *escaped out of their hands.* (Compare Luke iv. 30, sect. xxxii. and John viii. 59, sect. cv.) SECT. CXXXIV. John X. 39.

40 And went again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

And presently departing from Jerusalem, he *went* away *again* into the country *beyond Jordan, to the place* called Bethabara, *where* (as it has been observed before, John i. 28, Vol. I. p. 125;) *John was at first baptizing: and there he abode* for a while, till the fury of the multitude was a little abated. 40

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

And many of the inhabitants of that place who had been formerly acquainted with the Baptist, and remembered the strong and repeated testimonies which he had borne to Jesus, *came to him* there, to attend upon his preaching, *and said* among themselves, *John indeed did no miracle* himself, *but* he foretold extraordinary things of another; and we now find that *all* the *things which John said of this man were* exactly *true*, which is a divine attestation to the mission and authority of both. 41

42 And many believed on him there.

And many of them *believed on him there*, and happily improved this little season of his recess among them, as the means of their instruction and establishment in piety. 42

IMPROVEMENT.

IT is worthy of remark, that we here see our Lord Jesus at a festival, appointed only by human authority, in commemoration of a national deliverance. He came from Galilee to observe it in the temple, though *it was winter;* and brought with him, as at all times, a heart glowing with the most ardent and amiable zeal for the honour of God and the salvation of men, even of those who were studying to ensnare and destroy him. Ver. 22

What prudence, mingled with spirit and sweetness, runs through *his answers* to them! What inestimable *blessings* does he propose, to invite them to enter into *his fold!* May we never forget those gracious words! May we ever be entitled to all the comfort of them! *I give unto my sheep eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* Lord, may we be found in the number of those secure and happy souls, even of those who *know thee*, and who *obey thy voice, and follow thee*, whithersoever thou leadest them, by thine example, thy 24, 25 28 27

SECT. CXXXIV. providence, and thy Spirit! Then may we look on our *eternal life* and happiness as inviolably *secure*. Safely indeed may we trust it in *his hands* who could say, in so sublime and so glorious a sense, *I and the Father are one*. The enemies of our salvation must triumph then over omnipotence itself, before they can *wrest the sheep of Christ out of his hands*; nor will his fidelity to God, or his love to them, suffer them to be seduced by *fraud*, any more than destroyed by *violence*.

Ver. 30. 28, 29

Blessed situation of thy *little flock!* O thou faithful, thou compassionate, thou *Almighty Shepherd*, gather thou our souls with theirs; and never suffer us to forget of how great importance it is, that we still continue near thee, that we look up to thee for our defence and safety, and confide, not in our own power and wisdom, but in thine!

31 Who could have imagined that any *heart* could have been so base as to have intended evil, or any *hands* so cruel as to have armed themselves with instruments of death against *such a Person*, while speaking such words as these? Yet behold, these *Jews* do it; and that even in so sacred a place as *the temple* itself; as the genuine *offspring of those who slew the prophet and* 32 *priest of the Lord*, even *at his altar*. (Compare Mat. xxiii. 31, 35, and Luke xi. 48, 51.) But his wise and gentle *reply* disarmed them for a few months; and the divine care and power in an 39 extraordinary manner provided for his *escape*, and once more *rescued him* from their murderous hands.

40 Happy the inhabitants of the *country about Jordan* to which he retired! especially happy, in that they *knew the day of their* 41, 42 *visitation!* The testimony of *John the Baptist* is now recollected to excellent purposes, though he himself was mouldering in his tomb: nor is there any thing which a faithful *minister* will more earnestly desire, than that, even *while dead, he may yet speak*, for the honour of *Christ*, and the salvation of souls.

SECT. CXXXV.

Christ declares against divorces, except in the case of adultery, and adds some other particulars relating to the married state. Mat. XIX. 1—12. Mark X. 1—12.

MAT. XIX. 1.

AND, after the instructions that were given by our Lord to his disciples at Capernaum, (which were recorded above from sect xciii. to xcvi.), *it came to pass, that when Jesus had*

MAT. XIX. 1. AND it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished

these sayings he [arose from thence, *and*] departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan. [MARK X. 1—]

finished these discourses,[a] *he arose from thence,* [*and*] *departed from Galilee,* where he had dwelt so long, and through which he had made such repeated journies. *And* after he had first been up at Jerusalem, (as was before related, John vii. 10. p. 44.) and several other things had happened, which have already been considered in their proper place, *he came* at length (as was observed in the last section, John x. 40.) *into the borders of Judea beyond Jordan,*[b] where he spent some of the winter months, crossing the river as he saw occasion. *And* his arrival was no sooner known, but *great multitudes followed him* from all the neighbouring parts; *and,* particularly, *the people* who had seen him formerly at Bethabara *resorted to him again* (as was said, John x. 41;) *and, according to his* usual *custom, he* readily embraced the opportunity of preaching to them and *taught them* there *again,* as he had done elsewhere; *and* as they brought many sick persons to him, he *healed them* all *there;* which could not but increase the throng.

SECT. CXXXV. Mat. XIX. 1

2 And great multitudes followed him, [and the people resort unto him again; and as he was wont, he taught them again,] and he healed them there. [MARK X.—1.]

2

3 The Pharisees

And the Pharisees, who always had a watchful eye on his motions, and attended him with the most malignant designs being now more especially irritated by the fame of his late mira-

3

[a] *When Jesus had finished these discourses.*] The passages which Matthew and Mark have mentioned immediately before they introduce this story, are those discourses on humility and the forgiveness of injuries which have been considered above from sect. xciii. to xcvi. And I have sometimes been inclined to think, that this and the next following sections might have been introduced there, as previous to that feast of tabernacles which we have so often mentioned. But most harmonizers, without any scruple or apology, place them here, being determined, I suppose, by the close connection between the passages that are here related, and those events that follow them, which happened but a very little while before Christ's death.—It is of very little importance to us, whether these discourses were delivered now, or a few months before. However, he might truly be said to *arise from Galilee, and come into these parts,* though he took a considerable compass, and spent several weeks in the journey. Compare note [o] on Luke ii. 39, Vol. I. p. 77.

[b] *Beyond Jordan.*] Mark has expressed this with some little variation, διὰ τοῦ πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου, *by the farther side of Jordan;* or, as the learned Beza, and some other critics choose to render it, *on the banks of Jordan;* and this may seem to be more suitable to what is said of Christ's coming to the coast of Judea; which was bounded by Jordan, and had no coasts beyond it. But it appears from John x. 40. that *Bethabara, where John at first baptized* (John i, 28.) was the place to which our Lord removed, which was undoubtedly beyond Jordan, and over against Jericho. (Compare Josh. iii. 16. and Jud. vii. 24.) And this was so near to the coasts of Judea, that we might very well retain the usual version, and take the phrase as Matthew hath expressed it; especially as it is probable that Jesus, during his abode in these parts, might often cross the river, and pass from Bethabara to Judea, which lay on the opposite side.

SECT. CXXXV. Mat. XIX. 3

cles, which they had in vain endeavoured to suppress, (see John vii. 32, 47, and ix. 16, 24,) *came* hither also *to him*, with the view of getting some advantage over him, by *tempting* him with what they thought a very artful and ensnaring question: *and*, that they might, if possible, entangle him in his talk so as to find some reason to accuse him, or to discredit him at least among the people, they *asked him, saying unto him*, What thinkest thou, Master, *Is it lawful for a man to dismiss his wife for every* slight *cause* of dislike which may be found in her?[c] or is adultery the only just reason for a divorce?

also came unto him, tempting him, and [asked him,] saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? [MARK X. 2.]

4 *And he said to them in reply, Have ye not read*, (Gen. i. 27.) *that God the* almighty and all-wise *Creator, from the* very *beginning of the creation*, when he would not fail to constitute human nature in such a way as might be most conducive to its happiness, in forming the first parents of mankind *made them male and female*, or one man and one woman? which would neither allow of divorce or polygamy. *And* do you not remember, that when the woman was at first brought to him, the man *said*, as taught by an extraordinary revelation concerning the ends and obligations of marriage, which therefore may in effect be looked upon as a Divine testimony,[d] "*For this cause*, or on account of his

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that [God,] he which made *them*, [from the beginning of the creation,] made them male and female? [MARK X. 6.]

5 And said, for

[c] *To dismiss his wife for every cause.*] It is well known that there was a debate between the ancient rabbies (perhaps as old as our Lord's time,) concerning the interpretation of the law relating to divorce, Deut. xxiv. 1. The school of Sammai maintained that the words ערות דבר which we render *some uncleanness*, signified *adultery*; whereas the school of Hillel explained it of *any matter of dislike*. (See Selden. Uxor. Hebr. lib. iii. cap. 22.) Perhaps a medium between both would have been a juster interpretation than either; for it is certain, that the phrase may with peculiar propriety express any blemish or disorder which a woman might unjustly and foolishly conceal before marriage, that was afterwards discovered. At least I think it plain, from our Lord's answer, that the disciples of Sammai were mistaken; which farther appears from the provision the Mosaic law made for punishing adultery with death.—The interpretation of Hillel generally prevailed; and the Pharisees concluding Christ would, as he had done before, declare against divorces, for trivial causes, (Mat. v. 31, 32, and Luke xvi. 18.) might hope to expose him to popular resentment for retrenching a liberty which the law allowed: but our Lord feared not the consequence of doing it.

[d] *May in effect be looked upon as a Divine testimony.*] I think the ingenious author of Revelation examined with Candour solidly argues, from Adam's pronouncing concerning the obligation of a child's relation to his parents, which had never then existed, that he spake these words in consequence of some extraordinary divine illumination; which justifies the turn given in the paraphrase: nor could he without a revelation have known what had passed in his sleep, or ever have conjectured the original of woman to have been what he so plainly refers to. See Revelat. exam. with Candour, Vol. I. Dis. iii. p. 28—33.

this cause shall a man leave [his] father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain, shall be one flesh. [MARK X. 7, 8—.]

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. [MARK X.—8, 9.]

" engaging in the married state, *shall a man* SECT.
" *leave* both *his father and mother*, when those CXXXV.
" dear relations of parental and filial tender-
" ness shall take place, *and* shall closely *ad-* Mat.
" *here to his wife: and they two shall be* join- XIX. 5.
" ed in so intimate an union as to become *one*
" *flesh?*" (Gen. ii. 24.) *So that* it appears 6
of persons thus joined together, that *they are no longer two, but one flesh*, and should accordingly regard each other as members of one body. *What God therefore has* thus closely *yoked together, let not man separate;* but let the bond of marriage be esteemed as sacred, and incapable of being dissolved by any thing which does not make them cease to be one flesh, by making that of the one common to some third person. (See Whitby, in loc.)

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

They say unto him, by way of objection a- 7
gainst this, *Why then did Moses*, under divine direction and inspiration, *command* " a man, " whose wife found no favour in his eyes, be- " cause he had discovered," as it is there expressed, " some uncleanness in her," or (as it has been generally understood) some cause of distaste and aversion, " *to give* her *a bill of di-* " *vorce, and* so *to dismiss her?*" (Deut. xxiv. 1.)

MARK X. 3. And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

And he replied, and said unto them, How is it Mark X. 3.
that you take this matter; or *what did* you allege that *Moses* did *command you?* Is there any thing in his writings that recommends divorce and separation upon light occasions?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away.

And upon this *they said*, If it may not be 4
said that *Moses* does command or recommend it in itself, it is most evident from the passage we have mentioned, that he has *permitted* a man, in some cases, *to write a bill of divorce*, and to give it into his wife's hand, *and dismiss her;* on which foundation thou well knowest how frequently divorces prevail among us, and how justifiable they are generally esteemed.

MAT. XIX. 8. [And Jesus answered and said unto them,] Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts [wrote you this precept, *and*]

And Jesus answered and said to them, You Mat. XIX. 8
state the matter now more justly than before; for it amounts merely to a permission; but I must observe to you, that it was *on account of the hardness of your hearts*, and the perverseness of your tempers,[e] that *Moses wrote you this*

[e] *On account of the hardness of your hearts.*] How much this was the character of the Jewish nation is too apparent. See Exod. xxxiii. 3; xxxv. 9; Deut. ix. 6;

SECT. CXXXV. Mat. XIX. 8.

precept, [and] gave you such *a permission to put away your wives;* knowing that otherwise you might have been tempted to use them intolerably ill: *but,* as I just now told you, *it was not so from the beginning;* and the account which that writer gives of the original constitution of things, proves it to be an irregularity, how necessary soever he might find it, in some cases, to tolerate it, or rather, by making it irrevocable, to prevent mens doing it without deep consideration.

suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. [MARK X. 5.]

Mark X. 10.

And when the assembly was dismissed, and Jesus was retired from the multitude, as they were sitting together *in the house* where he lodged, *his disciples asked him again of the same matter,* as not being able fully to understand it, or to reconcile it with the precept of Moses.

MARK X. 10. And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter.

11 *And he says to them,* If you are willing to receive laws from me, you must submit to a greater restraint than Moses laid on the Israelites; for *I* expressly *tell you* (as I formerly did, Mat. v. 32, sect. xxxix. and Luke xvi. 18, sect. cxxiv.) *Whosoever shall dismiss his wife, except [it be] for whoredom,*[f] which is a fundamental breach of the main article of the marriage covenant, by which they are one flesh, *and shall marry another, commits adultery against her* that was his former wife, and who continues still to be so in the sight of God; *and he that shall marry her who is so dismissed,* without a sufficient cause, *commits adultery.*

11 And he saith unto them, [I say unto you,] Whosoever shall put away his wife, [except it *be* for fornication,] and [shall] marry another, committeth adultery against her: [and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.] [MAT. XIX. 9.]

12 *And,* on the other hand, by a parity of reason, *if a woman,* not injured in the important article just now mentioned, *shall put away her husband,* or extort from him a bill of divorce,[g] *and be married to another* man, *she commits*

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another,

xxxi. 27; Isa. xlviii. 4; Ezek. ii. 4; and Acts vii. 51.—Our Lord (as Grotius well observes,) strongly intimates, that a more tender disposition may justly be expected from his disciples.

[f] *Except it be for whoredom; εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ.*] Though *fornication* committed before marriage, and afterwards discovered, might be supposed to justify a divorce, *adultery* must much more evidently do it; and therefore it is plain the word must be taken in the extent which is here given it. (See note [c] on Mat. v. 32, Vol. I. p. 222.) But it is by a dangerous latitude of interpretation, that Milton (Prose Works, page 105.) would explain the word as signifying *any thing which should be to the husband as grievous and intolerable as whoredom.*—The case of obstinate desertion, where the husband cannot by law recover his wife, which was the celebrated case of the pious Galeacius Caracciolus, and which we find to be supposed in 1 Cor. vii. 15, is quite of a different nature; nor can a man under such a calamity be said to put away his wife.—Erasmus has a remarkable note on Mat. xix. 3, which shews he was not far from Milton's opinion.

[g] *If a woman shall put away her husband.*] Though it is certain, that the

she committeth adultery.

adultery, and as she deserves to be abhorred by men, so must she expect to be punished by God, as guilty of that enormous and detestable crime, if she do not from the very heart repent of it. SECT. CXXXV. Mark X. 12.

MAT. XIX. 10. His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

Then *his disciples say unto him, If this be the case between a man and his wife*, and the bond be thus indissoluble, surely *it is not expedient to marry;* since a man may by that means be caught in an inextricable snare, which may make him miserable all the rest of his life. Mat. XIX. 10

11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

But he said to them, All men cannot receive this saying of yours, that it is not expedient to marry; *but* only *they to whom it is given*, as a peculiar gift, to conquer those inclinations towards that state which God, for wise reasons, has wrought into the common constitution of human nature. 11

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men; and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that *is* able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

For there are [*some*] *eunuchs who were born so from their mother's womb*, and whose natural temper and inclination is in this respect peculiar; *and there are* [*some*] *eunuchs who were made eunuchs by* the wickedness of *men*, who drive on that scandalous traffic which the luxury and effeminacy of the eastern world has rendered so common; *and there are* [*some*] *eunuchs who have*, as it were, *made themselves eunuchs on account of the kingdom of heaven*, that is, who, by a resolute guard on their appetites and passions, have conquered the propensities of nature, that being free from the incumbrances of marriage, and devoting themselves to a life of more sublime devotion, they might promote the interest of my gospel. (Compare 1 Cor. vii. 7, 37.) *He* therefore, on the whole, *that* finds he *is able to receive* [*this saying*], *let him receive it;* or let him that is in his own conscience persuaded that he can glorify God most by a single life, choose it. Others may, and ought to marry; but let none lightly rush into that state, on a supposition that the bond of it may be broken through at pleasure. 12

Jewish law did not put it into a woman's power to divorce her husband, it is plain from Josephus, that it was done, not only by several ladies of distinguished rank, but even that his own wife did it, (see Dr. Lardner's Credibility, part. i. Vol. II. page 890, noted) having probably learned of the Roman women, who, in this age, are known to have practised it in the most scandalous manner. See Juv. Sat. vi. ver. 222—230. Compare 1 Sam. xxv. 44, and 1 Cor. vii. 15.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CXXXV. FROM what we have been reading, we may justly take occasion to adore the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence in creating the human species *male and female*, and providing for
Mat. XIX. 4. his new formed creature *Adam*, so suitable and so amiable a companion, to enliven every other object of delight, and to crown the pleasures of *paradise* itself.

7 Let us also acknowledge the apparent interposition of a wise and kind providence, in maintaining such a *proportion* between the *sexes*, even to this day, which so apparently tends to the benefit of both, as well as to the support of the race in future ages; as also in pepetuating in their hearts through succeeding gene-
5 rations that *mutual tenderness* for each other which the purest bosoms may feel and avow; and which is the foundation of such an union of souls as no other friendship will admit.

6 Let those who are *married*, considering the indissoluble bond by which *God has joined them together*, make it their constant care to promote the comfort and happiness of each other: and let them most cautiously guard against every degree of *contention*, or even of *distaste*, which might at length occasion an alienation in their affections, and render so close a bond proportionably grievous.

11, 12 Let none rashly run into these important engagements, nor determine their choice by light considerations, of a low and transitory nature. And if any, on the whole, prefer the freedom of a *single life* to a state which, with its peculiar comforts, must necessarily have its peculiar cares and trials too, let them diligently improve that disengagement, as an obligation to seek the *kingdom of God* with greater ardour, and to pursue its interests with more active zeal and application.

Mark X. 11, 12 To conclude; since it appears in this respect, as well as in some others, that the *gospel* revokes some indulgences which the *law of Moses* gave, let us endeavour to form our hearts by Divine grace to a wisdom, seriousness, and spirituality, which may suit this nobler dispensation; and while we are reading the precept of the *Jewish* legislator, let us remember we have a sublimer *Master*, and are to *do* and forbear *more than others*. (Mat. v. 47.)

SECT. CXXXVI.

Christ blesses the little children that were brought to him, and rebukes his disciples who would have forbid them. Mat. XIX. 13—15. Mark X. 13—16. Luke XVIII. 15—17.

MARK X. 13.

AND while Jesus continued here, as the inhabitants of the neighbouring country on

MARK X. 13.

AND they brou

[Luke, infants *and*] young children to him, that he should touch them, [*or* put *his* hands on them, and pray:] and [Luke, when] *his* disciples [Luke, saw *it*, they] rebuked those that brought *them*. [Mat. XIX. 13.—Luke XVIII. 15.]

SECT. CXXXVI

Mark X. 13

the banks of Jordan found their esteem for him continually increasing on their acquaintance with him, (John x. 41, 42, p. 215.) *they brought to him*, not only the sick, that they might be healed, (Mat. xix. 2, p. 217,) but also several *infants*, [*and*] other *young children*, who, though they could walk and speak, yet were not capable of understanding his doctrine, *that he might touch them*, [*or*] *lay his hands upon them* in a solemn manner, *and pray* for them;[a] not doubting but prayers so acceptable to God as his would prevail both for their present and future happiness. *And when his disciples*, and particularly the apostles, who were about him, *saw it*, *they rebuked those that brought them*, as apprehending them too troublesome, and thinking it beneath the dignity of so great a Prophet to concern himself about such little creatures, who were incapable of receiving any instruction from him.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. [Mat. XIX. 14. Luke XVIII.—16.]

14 *But Jesus seeing it, was greatly displeased*, and moved with some degree of indignation against his disciples; for he had a tender love to children, and well knew that a proper notice of these might turn to some valuable account;[b] *and* therefore he *said to them*, *Let the little children alone, and do not* now or at any other convenient time, *hinder them from coming to me*: I am pleased, rather than offended, to see them near me: *for of such is the kingdom of God*; per-

[a] *Lay his hands upon them, and pray.*] This was a rite that was very early used, particularly by those who stood in any superior relation, when they were praying for a blessing on young persons. See Gen. xlviii. 14—20.—I see no reason to think, with Elsner, that they were brought to Christ for the cure of some malady; for in that case, it is not to be imagined that the disciples would have been so inhumane as to prohibit them.

[b] Knew that a proper notice of these, &c.] Christ's shewing his regard in such a manner to them, not only must have been exceedingly pleasing to the parents, but the memory of this condescension might make tender and lasting impressions on the children themselves; and the sight must be very edifying and encouraging to other young persons who might happen to be present: not to say how instructive this gentleness to children may be to ministers, and how much their usefulness may, or might have been, promoted by a due regard to it.—Nicephorus tells us, that the celebrated Ignatius, afterwards Bishop of Antioch, was one of these infants.—Our Lord might reasonably be the more displeased with his disciples for endeavouring to prevent their being brought, as he had so lately set a child among them, and insisted on the necessity of their being made conformable to it, Mat. xviii. 2, 3, § xciii. p. 19.—I am obliged to Dr. Scott's late Version of St. Matthew's Gospel, which, according to the manner of the learned and ingenious author is exact to a wonder, for the alteration I have made here, and for some other changes, which I take this opportunity of acknowledging with due gratitude.

SECT. CXXXVI

Mark X. 14

sons of such a character are the true subjects of my kingdom, and heirs of eternal glory, to which many little children are received; and in token of it, the children of believing parents are to be admitted into my church by baptism.[c]

15 And *verily, I say unto you,* as I have formerly told you, (Mat. xviii. 3, 4, § xciii.) and would now have you to attend with seriousness while I repeat it, *Whosoever shall not* be willing to *receive the kingdom of God,* or the gospel dispensation, and the happiness it promises, *as a little child,* divesting himself of those prejudices and those secular views which men contract in their riper years, that he may come, as it were, to the humility and meekness, the simplicity and teachableness of a little child, (compare Psal. cxxxi. 2.) *he shall not in any wise,* or on any terms, *enter into it,* be his genius ever so sublime, or his circumstances in life ever so considerable.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall [in no wise] enter therein. [Luke XVIII. 17.]

16 *And* having said this, he would no longer be detained from shewing his regard unto these little children, but, *having called them to him,* and ordered the infants to be brought, *he took them up in his arms,* tenderly embracing them with a holy complacency and love; *and,* as a farther token of the overflowing kindness and benevolence of his heart towards them, he *laid his hands upon them, and blessed them,* recommending them in a solemn manner to the divine blessing and favour; which accordingly descended upon them, to strengthen their constitutions, and to sanctify their hearts. *And,* after this, *he departed from thence* to another place in the neighbourhood, where the young ruler attended him, as will be presently related.

16 And he [Luke, called them unto him, *and*] took them up in his arms, [and] put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them; [and departed thence.] [Mat. XIX. 15. Luke XVIII. 16.—]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mark X. 16

LET us make a pause here, that we may more attentively review this delightful and instructive sight; that we may see this

[c] *For of such is the kingdom of God,* &c.] I acknowledge these words will not of themselves prove *infant baptism* to be an institution of Christ; but if that appears from other scriptures to be the case (which I think most probable,) there will be proportionable reason to believe that our Lord might here intend some reference to it; and I cannot approve of rendering τοιουτων, *such as resemble these.* It is the part of a faithful translator not to limit the sense of the original, nor to fix what it leaves ambiguous

compassionate *Shepherd of Israel*, thus *gathering the lambs in* SECT.
his arms, and carrying them in his bosom with all the tokens of CXXXVI
tender regard (Isa. xl. 11), *rebuking his disciples* who forbade Ver. 14
their coming, and *laying his* gracious *hands upon them to bless them*. How condescending and engaging a behaviour! how encouraging and amiable an image!

Let his *ministers* view it, to teach them a becoming regard to *the lambs* of their *flock*, who should early be taken notice of and instructed; and for and with whom they should frequently *pray*; remembering how often Divine grace takes possession of the heart in the years of *infancy*, and *sanctifies* the children of God almost *from the womb*. Let every **first** impression made upon their tender minds be cherished; and let not those whom *Christ* himself is ready to receive, be disregarded by *his servants*, who upon all occasions should *be gentle unto all*, and *apt to teach*. (2 Tim. ii. 24.)

Let *parents* view this sight with pleasure and thankfulness: 13
let it encourage them to *bring their children to Christ* by faith, and to commit them to him in *baptism*, and by prayer. And if he who *has the keys of death and the unseen world*, (Rev. i. 18) see fit to remove those dear creatures from us in their early days, let the remembrance of this story comfort us, and teach us to hope, that he who so graciously *received these children* has not forgotten ours, but that they are sweetly *fallen asleep in him*, and will be the everlasting objects of his care and love; *for of* 14
such is the kingdom of God.

Let *children* especially observe this. The great and glorious *Ibid.*
Redeemer did not *despise these little ones*; nay, he was *much displeased* with those who would have prevented their being *brought to him*. As kindly would he, no doubt, have received you, ye dear *children*, who read or hear this; as kindly will he still receive you, if you go to him in the sincerity of your hearts, and ask his blessing in humble and earnest prayer. Though you see not *Christ*, he sees and hears *you*; he is now present with you, to receive you, to bless you, and to save you. Happy the weakest of you when lodged in the *arms of Christ!* nothing can *pluck you from thence*, or ever hurt you there.

In a word, let us *all* commit ourselves to him; and let us be 15
disposed to *become as little children*, if we desire to *enter into his kingdom*. Let us not govern ourselves by the vain maxims of a corrupt and degenerate age. Let not pride, ambition, lust, or avarice, possess, torment, and enslave our minds; but, with the amiable *simplicity of children*, let us put ourselves into the wise and kind hands of *Jesus*, as our Guardian; and refer ourselves to his pastoral and parental care, to be clothed and fed, to be guided and disposed of, as he shall see fit. For this purpose, O God, may we be *born again* by thy *Spirit*, and *formed*

SECT. CXXXVI. *anew* by thy *grace!* since by this method alone we can be *made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light* (Col. i. 12), and be so *the children of God*, as to be at length *the children of the resurrection.*

SECT. CXXXVII.

A rich young man applying himself to Christ for direction in the way to eternal life, and afterwards parting with him out of regard to his possessions, gives our Lord an occasion of cautioning his disciples concerning the danger of riches. Mat. XIX. 16, *to the end.* Mark X. 17—31. Luke XVIII. 18—30.

MARK X. 17.

SECT. CXXXVII. Mark X. 17

AND as he went out from thence, [a] *into the way* to some other place which he designed to visit, *behold,* a most remarkable occurrence happened; for *there came one,* even *a certain magistrate,* or ruler, who was a young person in very plentiful circumstances, *running* with an eager desire to converse with Jesus before he left that place; *and* he no sooner was come near him, but, *kneeling down to him* with the humblest respect, *he asked him* with great reverence and earnestness, *saying, Good Master,* [b] I am come to thee as a most wise and gracious Teacher, and beseech thee to answer me a question of the highest importance: *What good thing shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?* for nothing lies with so much weight upon my mind as this, and I am determined to secure it at any rate.

MARK X. 17.
AND when he was gone forth into the way, [behold,] there came one [LUKE, a certain ruler] running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, [LUKE, saying,] Good Master, what [good thing] shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life; [MAT. XIX. 16. LUKE XVIII. 18.]

18 *And Jesus,* upon this, *said to him Why dost thou call me good,* [c] whom thou regardest only as a prophet sent from God, and dost not look upon to be any more than a mere man? Thou shouldst remember upon all occasions, that *none is*

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good

[a] *As he went out* from thence.] Both Matthew and Luke relate this story of the young ruler immediately after that in the preceding section; but Mark is more determinate than either of them in the connection, and more circumstantial in the narration.

[b] *Good Master.*] Wolfius observes that this was a title which the Jewish rabbies affected; which, if it were indeed so, might be an additional reason for our Lord's remark upon it.

[c] *Why dost thou call me good?*] It is certain that some very ancient manuscripts read this clause, Τι με ερωτας περι του αγαθου, *Why dost thou ask me what good thing is to be done?* But neither the number of copies, nor the turn of our Lord's answer, will by any means admit of such a reading.

but one, *that is* God: [but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.] [MAT. XIX. 17. LUKE XVIII. 19.]

perfectly *good*, *but one* glorious and immutable Being, [*even*] the ever blessed and eternal *God*; nor can any man or angel deserve the title of good in any degree of comparison with him, from whom originally stream forth all those rays of goodness which are but imperfectly reflected from them. *But* as to the question thou hast asked, *If thou art* resolutely *determined to enter into life*, it is absolutely necessary thou shouldst *keep the* Divine *commandments*; the perfect observance of which alone can give thee a legal claim to it, and in the wilful neglect of which thou must never on any terms expect it.

SECT. CXXXVII

Mark X. 18.

19 [He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said,] Thou knowest the commandments, [Thou shalt do no murder; Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness;] Defraud not; Honour thy father and [LUKE, thy] mother; [and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.] MAT. XIX. 18, 19. LUKE XVIII. 20.]

Then the young ruler, that *he* might fully understand the mind of Jesus, eagerly *says to him*, *Which* are those commandments on the observation of which my eternal life depends?

19

Jesus said, *Thou* undoubtedly *knowest the commandments* which God gave to Moses, written on the tables of stone at Mount Sinai, among which those of the second table, however neglected by the Pharisees, are by no means to be forgotten; such as, "*Thou shalt not kill*; "*Thou shalt not commit adultery*; *Thou shalt* "*not steal*; *Thou shalt not bear false witness* "against thy neighbour; *Thou shalt not* covet "any part of his property, or take any methods "to *defraud* him;"[d] and that which indeed stands in the front of all these, "*Honour thy* "*father and thy mother*." These are the six last commandments, which I now recommend to thy consideration; *and* they may all be summed up in that one comprehensive precept, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*." (See Exod. xx. 12—17, and Lev. xix. 18.)

20 And [the young

And the young man, not apprehending the

20

[d] *Thou shalt not defraud.*] As Mark seems to put this for the tenth commandment, Dr. Hammond (in loc.) and Archbishop Tillotson, (see his Works, Vol. II. p. 257) suppose it a key to the sense of those words, *Thou shalt not covet*; the meaning of which, they argue, is as if it had been said, "Thou shalt not be so de-"sirous of thy neighbour's possessions "as to be willing to injure the owner by "depriving him of them, that thou may-"est secure them to thyself." But the apostle Paul strongly intimates, that the sense of that command is much more extensive, (Rom. vii. 7;) and as the preceding commandments had forbid to invade the life, the bed, the property, or reputation of another, so this requires a guard on those irregular appetites and passions which might by insensible degrees lead men to murder, adultery, theft, or false witness.

SECT. CXXXVII. Mark X. 20

large extent and spiritual meaning of these precepts, *replied*, with great cheerfulness and confidence, *and said to him*, *Master*, I have been early taught these precepts, and may venture to say, that *I have* conscientiously *observed all these* even *from my infancy*,[e] and have abstained from each of the vices and immoralities condemned in them; *what* then *do I farther need*, in order to secure the glorious prize after which I am seeking?

man] answered and said unto him, Master, all these [things] have I observed from my youth: [What lack I yet?] [Mat. XIX. 20. Luke XVIII. 21.]

21 *And Jesus looking stedfastly upon him*, *loved him*, and felt the emotions of complacency mingled with tender compassion, in regard to so young a person, who had maintained so honourable a character in such an elevated station of life, and was under such concern about another world; yet at the same time, amidst all these hopeful circumstances, was governed still by a secret fondness for the possessions he enjoyed in this: *and* as our Lord thought fit to manifest this fondness to himself and others, *when he had heard these things* which have been mentioned above, *he* was pleased to call him forth to a peculiar trial; and therefore *said unto him*, Thus far it is well; but *yet*, alas, *One thing thou* still *wantest*,[f] in order to prove that integrity of soul and that prevailing love to God, without which none can be entitled to future blessedness: by me he now commands thee, *if thou wilt be perfect*, and determine to submit to all that he requires, to *go thy way* immediately, and *sell all thy possessions*,[g]

21 Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and [Luke, when he heard these things, he] said unto him, [Luke, yet] one thing thou lackest; [if thou wilt be perfect,] go thy way, sell whatsoever thou

[e] *I have observed all these, even from my infancy.*] The phrase απο νεοτητος may indeed be very exactly rendered *from my youth*: but as he was yet but a young man, it is probably here put for infancy or childhood. It is plain he did not understand the spiritual meaning and extent of the *law* according to our Lord's explication of it in his sermon on the mount; or he would not have pleaded his exact obedience to it. But the Jews in general seem to have thought that, if they abstained from gross crimes, sacrifices might atone for smaller neglects or offences. And this compound seems to have been that righteousness of their own, in which, to their final ruin, they trusted for justification before God, to the neglect of the righteousness which is of God by faith.—Compare Rom. x. 3, and Phil. iii. 9.

[f] *One thing thou wantest.*] Our Lord does not say he wanted but one thing; so that nothing can be concluded from hence against the necessity of an acquaintance with some truths, of which this youth, hopeful and amiable as he was, appears to have been ignorant. But it was to be charged on that want of sincere piety which his conduct presently discovered, that he did not come to the knowledge of them by a continued and submissive attendance on the teaching of Christ. See John vii. 17, sect. xcix.

[g] *Sell all thy possessions.*] It is strange that the learned and accurate Dr. Clarke should suppose that Christ did not de-

SECT. CXXXVII

Mark X. 21.

hast, and give to the poor; and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. [MAT. XIX. 21. LUKE XVIII. 22.]

valuable as they are, *and* to *distribute* the money which arises from the sale of them *to the poor*; do this, *and thou shalt have* an infinitely more excellent *treasure in heaven: and*, in the assured hope of this, I call thee to *come* and *take up the cross, and* with courage and resolution to *follow me* as my constant attendant, though it should be even at the expence of thy life, as well as thine estate.

22 [But when the young man heard that saying,] he was sad, and went away [LUKE, very sorrowful;] for he, [LUKE, was very rich, *and*] had great possessions. [MAT. XIX. 22—LUKE XVIII. 23.]

But when the young man heard that saying, 22 and saw that all his gay and delightful prospects for life must be given up in a moment, *he was* exceedingly concerned and *troubled* at it; *and* he *went away in great sorrow; for he was very rich, [and] had great possessions,* which were lately fallen into his hands; and how desirous soever he was of eternal life, he could not resolve to secure it at so great an expence.

23 And [LUKE, when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful,] he looked round about, and saith to his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. [MAT. XIX. 23.—LUKE XVIII. 24.]

And when Jesus saw that, though *he was very sorrowful,* yet he chose rather to go away than to part with his estate in the views of eternal happiness, *he looked round* on all that were *about* him, *and said to his disciples,* Observe this instructive incident, and learn to make this reflection upon it; *How hardly shall they that possess* the *riches* of this world *enter into the kingdom of God!* Dwell upon the thought, and repeat it, in order, if possible, to wean your hearts from these delusive vanities which often prove so fatal to the soul: for *verily I say unto you,* So many snares attend such circumstances, *that a rich man will hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven,* or be brought to such a relish for the gospel, and its future blessings, as either to resign or improve his worldly possessions, in 23

mand this, in order to his being in a state of acceptance with God, but in order to his giving a testimony of exalted piety; or, at least, as necessary at that time to his being a preacher of the gospel. Our Lord's manner of proposing the trial, and his reflection on the young man's going away, plainly shew, that it was in those circumstances necessary to his salvation. And indeed it is most apparent, that though God does not in fact require every man to distribute all his goods to others, and so in effect to become one of the number of poor to be relieved out of his own possessions, yet sincere virtue and piety demand an habitual readiness, not only to sacrifice our possessions, but our lives, at the command of God; and Providence does in fact call some out to trials as severe as this.—His refusal plainly shewed, he valued his worldly possessions more than eternal life; and our Lord with great wisdom, took this direct and convincing method of manifesting both to himself and others, that secret insincerity and carnality of temper which prevailed under all these specious pretences and promising appearances.

SECT. CXXXVII.

such a manner as the laws of that kingdom require.

Mark X. 24

And the disciples were quite *astonished at his words;* for they were ready to imagine that, ere long, all the rich and great people of the country would appear for their Lord, and fix him on the throne of Israel.

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words.—

But Jesus, answering again to that surprise which he saw in their countenances, *says to them* in the most condescending manner, My dear *children,* when you consider what I said more attentively, you will not so much wonder at it; for it is manifest that the generality of rich men place their chief confidence and delight in the things of this present world: and you know that true religion requires a heart abstracted from them, and placed on nobler objects: judge then for yourselves, *how hard is it for them that* thus *trust in* their *riches, to enter into the kingdom of*

— But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 *God! And* therefore *I say to you again,* in yet stronger terms, that your common proverb may have its place here, That *it is easier* for the huge cable of a ship, or even *for a camel to go through the eye of a needle,*[h] *than* it is *for a rich man* to conquer the snares of his estate and the corruptions of his heart so far as *to enter into the kingdom of God,* and become the faithful, obedient subject of his Son.

25 [And again I say unto you,] It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. [MAT. XIX. 24. LUKE XVIII. 25.]

26 *And when his disciples heard* [*this*] repetition and illustration of what was before said, *they were struck into exceeding great and inexpressible amazement* at it, *saying one to another,* And *who then can be saved?* Who that are rich can ever get to heaven? And what a discouragement will it be to others, to see the rich and the great neglecting salvation, and turning the means of their happiness and usefulness into the instruments of their destruction?

26 And when his [disciples heard it,] they were [exceedingly amazed, and] astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? [MAT. XIX. 25. LUKE XVIII. 26.]

[h] *Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*] Theophylact, and after him some other critics, for καμηλον read καμιλον which they explain of *a cable rope,* which might appear more fitly to be mentioned as what *could not pass through a needle's eye.* Others very precariously assert, that there was near Jerusalem a low gate called the needle's eye, through which a camel could not pass unless his load were taken off. But I see no reason for departing from the received reading and interpretation; nor is there any thing in this proverbial expression, as it here stands, but what is very agreeable to the eastern taste, and may be paralleled in other Jewish writers. See Dr. Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xix. 24, where it is shewn there was a Jewish proverb to the same purpose of the elephant.

27 And Jesus looking upon them, saith [unto them,] With men [this is] impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible, [Luke, *even* the things which are impossible with men.] [Mat. XIX. 26. Luke XVIII. 27.]

But Jesus, looking stedfastly upon them, saith unto them, With men it is indeed *impossible,* and the strength of corrupt nature alone will not be sufficient to encounter such difficulties as these; *but* it is *not* impossible *with God* to animate their hearts against them: *for* his grace has an almighty energy, and *with God all things are possible* [*even*] *the things which are* most *impossible with men,* and seem so insurmountable to human strength as to be reckoned utterly impracticable; to him therefore let the rich and poor unite their supplications, that each may be rendered superior to the snares which attend their respective circumstances. SECT. CXXXVII. Mark X. 27.

28 Then Peter [answered, and] began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee! [What shall we have therefore?] [Mat. XIX. 27. Luke XVIII. 28.]

Then Peter replied, and with some warmth and confidence *began to say unto him,* Well, Master, *behold,* we have done what this youth, hopeful as he seemed, had not the resolution to do; for though indeed we had not much, *we have left all* the little that we had in the world, *and* have at all adventures *followed thee* with the sincerest zeal and affection: *what* reward *shall we therefore have?* for we persuade ourselves thou wilt not permit us finally to be losers in thy cause. 28

Mat. XIX. 28. And Jesus [answered and] said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration,

And Jesus answering said to them, You may depend upon it that you shall not, but will be found upon the whole to have acted the wisest part; for *verily I say unto you,* and assure you of it, *That you who have followed me* in my humiliation, shall at length be distinguished by proportionable honours: and *in the* great *renovation* of all things,[1] *when* all the children of Mat. XIX. 28.

[1] *In the great renovation* of all things.] I have given what appears to me the most natural sense of this difficult passage. Mr. Fleming agrees with our translators in connecting the words εν τη παλιγγενεσια with the preceding clause; and paraphrases the verse thus, "As for "you, my apostles, who have followed "me in this new state of the church, "which is to be brought to the birth, "when I am to ascend to heaven, that "I may govern the world from thence "by my word and Spirit, ye shall be to "the whole Christian church what the "twelve heads of the tribes were of old "to the Jewish nation: my followers shall "appeal to your decisions, as the rule "of their faith and practice." (Fleming's Christology Vol. I. p. 28.) But it seems plain to me, that our Lord refers in the following words to the time of final retribution, which he elsewhere mentions as that in which he should *sit on the throne of his glory.* Mat. xxv. 31, 32.—Mr. Pierce (on Heb. i. 5.) follows Brennius in expounding the regeneration of the time when Christ should be (as it were) *begotten again* by his *resurrection from the dead;* but the criticism seems very unnatural, and the objection mentioned above, lies against it in its full force.—The laboured argument which Dr. Thomas

SECT. CXXXVII. Mat. XIX. 28.

God shall, as it were, be born anew from their graves; when created nature shall put on its fairest forms to receive them, and *the Son of man* presiding over that august assembly, *shall sit on the throne of his glory*, exalted above the highest angels of God, *you also*, my faithful apostles, *shall sit* around me *upon twelve* radiant *thrones*,[k] *judging the twelve tribes of Israel;* concurring joyfully with me in the sentence which shall then be passed on the Jewish nation, and on all the professed members of my church, as they have been sincere, or faithless, in their profession, and in the observance of those laws which you, by authority from me, their exalted Sovereign, shall have given them.

when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. [MARK X. 29. —LUKE XVIII. 29.—]

Mark X. 29.

And though some peculiar rewards are reserved for you, with regard to your apostolic character, yet *there is no man* in any state or condition of life, whether in this or in any future age of the world, *who hath left*, or shall hereafter leave, his *house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands;* in one word, none who shall undergo the loss of any temporal advantages, *for the sake of the kingdom of God, [that is,] for my name's sake* 30 *and the gospel's; But he shall receive manifold more* for it, in the inward satisfaction and divine consolations attending real religion, [*yea*] even *an hundred-fold, now in this present time*, more than all the comfort he could naturally have found in *houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands;* such shall be the delights of a good conscience, and the secret manifestations of divine acceptance and favour, which shall mingle themselves *with* all the *persecutions* he shall here endure;[l]

MARK X.—29. [And] there is no man, that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, [LUKE, for the kingdom of God's sake, *that is,*] for my [name's] sake, and the gospel's, [MAT. XIX 29. —LUKE XVIII.—29.]

30 But he shall receive [LUKE, manifold more, *yea,*] an hundred-fold now in this [LUKE, present] time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions.

Burnet deduces from hence, to prove the renovation of the earth at the millennium, is very precarious; since the words will so fairly admit of another sense, referring them to the general resurrection. See Burnet's Theory, Vol. II p. 229, 230.

[k] *Shall sit upon twelve thrones.*] Our Lord well knew that Judas would fall from his office and dignity; but as Matthias filled his place, and so stood entitled to the promise, he did not think it fit to enter into any particular distinction; but speaks to the whole body of the apostles in words which he knew would be accomplished to the far greater part of those to whom they were addressed.

[l] *Shall receive—an hundred-fold now in this present time,—with persecutions.*] Dr. Massey, in his Vernacula Sacra, p. 18, proposes a very different version of this period, *viz.* "*Though he may not receive* "[ειν μη λαβη] *an hundred fold,* (or a "sufficient recompence) *now in this* "*time, houses, and brethren, and sisters,* "*and mothers, and children, and lands;*

and in the world to come [shall inherit] eternal life. MAT. XIX. 29. LUKE XVIII. 30.] *and* when they are over, as they will quickly be, *in the world to come he shall inherit everlasting life*, and be for ever enjoying that happiness which God has prepared for all his children, especially for such heroic souls as these, when all earthly relations are ceased, and the world itself is dissolved. SECT. CXXXVII. MARK X. 30.

31 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last [*shall be*] first. [MAT. XIX. 30.] *But* such will be the issue and event of things under the gospel, that *many* [*who are*] *first* in the advantages and privileges they enjoy, *shall*, notwithstanding this, fall short of others, and *be last* in the great day of accounts; *and* those who are *the last shall* prove in this respect to *be* the *first*: for some, from whom it might be least expected, shall embrace the gospel, and courageously endure the greatest hardships for it; while others, with far greater advantages, shall reject it, and, under much stronger engagements, shall desert it. 31

IMPROVEMENT.

WHO can behold, without weeping eyes and a bleeding heart, *this lovely youth perishing in sin!*[m] What could have appeared more promising than this solicitous *concern* about *eternal life*, in a *young man* rich in the possessions and high in the honours of the present world! To see him *running* with such eagerness to the feet of a *Redeemer*, *kneeling down* with such humility before him, calling upon him by so honourable a *title*, and professing so sincere a desire of instruction, could not but lead us to conclude, *Surely this man was not far from the kingdom of God*; nor do we wonder that *Jesus beholding him loved him*. Who would not have looked on such an object with complacency! Who would not have expected that *this pleasant plant* should have *brought forth grapes*; but behold, *it brought forth wild grapes!* (Isa. v. 2.) So have we seen, in the compass perhaps of our small observation and experience, many a fair blossom fall withering to the ground. So have the hopes of *ministers* MARK X. 17. 21

" yet *after persecution* [μετα διωγμον], *and* " *in the world to come*, he shall receive " *eternal life*." But I neither think the authority of Theophylact sufficient to warrant the substituting διωγμον for διωγμων; nor can I find any satisfactory example of such an ellipsis as this version supposes in the original, if that variation were allowed; to which we may add, that the parallel passages both in Matthew and Luke lie strongly against the version proposed.

[m] *Lovely youth perishing in sin.*] Dr. Watt's excellent Sermon on this subject, and with this title, will, I doubt not, be recollected by multitudes on this occasion. There is so much beauty and pathos, so much wisdom and piety in it, that I could wish it might be attentively perused, especially by every one of my *younger readers*; for I would hope there are few capable of reading it without some serious impressions.

SECT. CXXXVII. and *parents*, and other religious friends, been disappointed with respect to many *young persons*, adorned with a variety of amiable qualifications, yet *lacking one thing* and *parting with Christ* when put to the trial, after all the regard they have shewn to his name, and all the pleasing expectations they have given of a willingness to serve him. O my *young reader*, whoever thou art, I earnestly pray that thou mayest not be added to that number!

Ver. 19, 20 This unhappy *youth* imagined himself in the certain *way of salvation* because he was free from the stains of fraud and injustice, of adultery and theft, of perjury and murder, or any other gross and infamous sin. But behold, how awful a method *Christ* takes to open to him that *insincerity of heart* which he seems himself not to have known. Observe how strange a command 21 he gives him, *to sell all, and distribute to the poor.* We cannot say that the very same is directly required of us; yet, by this order that was given to him, we are obliged to part with *our all* when it cannot be preserved with a good conscience; and by the general rules of *Christianity*, and by its fundamental precepts, we are in duty bound, conscientiously to use, not only a *little part* of our substance, but even *the whole* of it for God, as *stewards* who are another day to give up a strict account for all. And if we like not *Christ* and *glory* on these terms, *our end* will be no better than *his.* Of him we read, that after all his morality, and all his zeal, *he went away* from *Christ*, (though *sorrowful*,) *because he had great possessions.* Oh dear-bought wealth, which was the price of his soul!

22 Let us look upon him, and receive instruction; let us learn to be upon our guard against *this vain world*, that specious *harlot, who hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her*; (Prov. vii. 26.) How universally are *riches* desired, how eagerly are they pursued, by persons in all stations, and of all professions of life! Yet what do they generally prove, but shining mischief and gilded ruin! If we believe the incarnate *wisdom of God*, *They make our salvation exceeding hazardous.* Yet who does not wish for them? Who does not think 23, 25 that he has wisdom and grace enough to stand the danger? But God knows otherwise, and therefore he keeps, or makes, so many of *his children poor.*—Let them be contented with their safer state; and let those who are *rich* be importunate with God for those influences of his *grace* which can effect those things that are *impossible with men.*

27 On the whole, let us not think much of any thing which *Christ* demands, knowing that whatever we may *lose*, or whatever we may *resign*, we shall *gain far more* by his favour. The 29 *testimony of a good conscience* before him, a life of *friendship* with God, the consolations of his Spirit, and the hopes of his glory,

will yield, even for the present, *an hundred-fold* more satisfaction than the possessions of the greatest *riches*, or the enjoyment of the most tender and beloved *relatives*. How much more abundantly then will all be repaid in the *heavenly state!* And, if we cannot trust the *promise* of *our Lord* for it, we are no more real *Christians* than if we were publicly to worship *mammon*, or *Plutus*, with all the idolatrous rites of the ancient heathens. SECT. CXXXVII. Ver. 30

SECT. CXXXVIII.

Christ, by the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, warns the Jews against envying the Gentiles those equal privileges to which they should be called in the Messiah's kingdom. Mat. XX. 1—16.

MAT. XX. 1.

MAT. XX. 1. FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

IN order to illustrate the observation which our Lord had just been making, "that many who "were first should be last, and many last should "be first," he added the following parable, and said, This will be found to be the case in many instances; *for the kingdom of heaven*, or the gospel-dispensation, *is like*, or may be fitly represented by the similitude of *a man*[a] *that was the master of a family, who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard*, at the time when the vintage was to be gathered in: *And having agreed with the labourers for* the usual price of *a* denarius, or Roman *penny*, *a day*,[b] *he sent them into his vineyard*, to be employed there in his service. SECT. CXXXVIII. Matt. XX. 1

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

2

3 And he went out about the third

And going out again *about the third hour*[c] 3

[a] *Is like*, or may be fitly represented by the similitude of *a man*.] See note [1] on Luke vii. 32, Vol. I. p. 322.—Those who are acquainted with the eastern manners know, that this parable is exactly suited to them in a variety of circumstances, which many learned commentators have observed, but which it does not seem necessary to enumerate here. See Petav. Dogmat. Theolog. Vol. I. p. 305, *& seq.*

[b] A denarius, or Roman *penny, a day*.] It seems from hence, that this (which was in value about seven-pence halfpenny of our money) was the usual price of a day's service among the Jews; as Tacitus tells us it was among the Romans. (Annal. I. 17.) It is therefore justly mentioned, Rev. vi. 6, as a proof of the great scarcity of provisions, when a measure or chœnix of wheat, which was the usual allowance to one man for a day, and was about an English quart, was sold at that price.

[c] *About the third hour*.] Dr. Whitby in his Paraphrase explains the first call in the morning, of the earliest days of Christ's preaching; that of the third hour, as referring to the mission of the apostles when they were first sent forth to preach among the Jews: those of the sixth and ninth hours, of their preaching the gospel, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, to the Jews in Judea, and then to the dispersed in other parts: and that of the eleventh hour, of the calling of the Gentiles: but this seems an excessive nicety of dis-

SECT. CXXXVIII. Mat. XX. 4

(or at nine in the morning,) *he saw others standing unemployed in the market*, where it was customary for servants to stand, in order to their being hired. *And he said to them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is* the *reasonable* value of your labour,[d] *I will* be sure to *give you. And they went away* to their work without any more particular agreement.

hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place.

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 And *again going out about the sixth and ninth hour* (or at noon, and at three in the afternoon,) *he did the same*, and sent others to work on the same general promise of giving them as much as they could reasonably expect.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 *And* once more, *about the eleventh hour* (or at five in the afternoon,) *going out* of his house, *he* returned to the market, and *found others standing unemployed: and he says to them, Why do ye stand here* and do nothing? Do you choose thus to trifle away your time, and continue *the whole day unemployed? They say unto him*, No; but we continue here, *because no one has hired us* to any kind of labour. Then *he says to them, Go ye also into the vineyard*, where you may be employed, *and whatsoever is* fit and *reasonable* to be given for your labour, *you shall receive.*

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 *Now when evening was come* (or at six o'clock,) the time when workmen were paid off, and sent home, *the lord of the vineyard says to his steward, Call the labourers* who have been working in the vineyard, *and pay them their wages, beginning from* those who were *the last* hired, and so going on *even to the first.*

8 So when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 *And* having thus been ordered to present themselves, *when they* accordingly *came* foremost *who* [*were hired*] *about the eleventh hour*, and so had entered last into the vineyard, *they each* of them *received* no less than *a penny*, the master having

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

tinction.—The Jews were ready to look upon themselves with complacency, as a people who had for many ages adhered to the worship of the true God and in some periods had endured great extremities out of a regard to it; and it seems natural to interpret, what is said (ver. 12,) of *bearing the burden and heat of the day*, with a reference to this, rather than to any peculiar hardship which the earlier converts among the Jews might have endured more than the believing Gentiles, many of whom met with much the same treatment on their embracing Christianity. See 1 Thess. ii. 14.

[d] *Whatsoever is reasonable.*] So I think the word δικαιον may be rendered, Phil. iv. 7; Col. iv. 1; and 2 Pet. i. 13; and that it signifies, not only what a person may legally claim, but what he might equitably expect from a person of honour and humanity.

directed they should be thus generously rewarded. SECT. CXXXVIII.

Mat. XX. 10. 10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more: and they likewise received every man a penny.

And upon seeing this, *when* those who were *the first*, and had been working all the day, *came* to be paid, *they reckoned* with themselves *that they should have received* considerably *more; but they* were *also* paid the same, and only *received every one a penny.*

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house.

And when they had [*received it,*] instead of being satisfied with what was promised them, *they murmured against the master of the house*[e] who had set them to work,

12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

and said, Truly these last have laboured but one hour, and thou hast made them equal in the recompense they have received *to us, who have borne the* whole *burden*, and gone through all the toil *and heat of the day* from morning to night.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

But he calmly *answered and said to one of them*, who spoke in the name of the rest, *Friend*, it is most apparent that *I do not* in any degree *injure thee*, or any of thy companions: *didst not thou agree with me* to labour all the day *for a penny*, and hast thou not received it?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

Take what is justly *thine, and be gone*, without pretending to dictate to me in an affair wherein thou hast no manner of concern; *for I will* do as I see fit, and *give to this last* man, who came in but an hour ago, *even as* I do *to thee.*[f]

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?

And indeed what colour hast thou for a complaint? *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with* what is undoubtedly *mine own* property?[g] What

[e] *They murmured against the master of the house.*] That this was the case of the Jews, upon a general notion of the Gentiles being, according to the Christian scheme, intended to be partakers with them in the same church-privileges, is plain from a variety of scriptures. See Acts xi. 2, 3; xiii. 45—50; xvii. 5, 13; xviii. 6, 13; xxii. 21, 22; xxviii. 29; Rom. xi. 28; and 1 Thess. ii. 16.

[f] *I will give to this last even as to thee.*] Since no murmuring can happen among the blessed, this must refer to the unbelieving Jews; but as it is certain they will have no place in the kingdom of heaven, we plainly see that it would be very absurd to pretend to draw doctrinal consequences from every incidental circumstance of a parable.

[g] *And indeed, is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?*] That the particle η may thus be rendered, *And indeed*, has been observed before, note[c], on Mat. vii. 9. Vol. I. p. 244.—And as to what is here suggested, so many scriptures declare expressly, that God at the great day will *render to every one according to his works*, and intimate that there shall be an exact correspondence between every man's character and the reward which (through the riches of Divine grace) shall then be bestowed, that it would be very unreasonable, from such a circumstance as this in the parable, to infer the contrary. But if any should maintain, that all the favours of Divine Providence and grace must now be dispensed only in proportion to the wisdom and goodness of the per-

SECT. CXXXVIII. Mat. XX. 15.

if I pleased to give it to one who had done nothing at all for it? *Is thine eye evil,*[h] or dost thou look on with an envious and malignant countenance, *because I am* so *good*, that out of compassion to these poor men I freely give them what they could not justly have claimed?

Is thine eye evil, because I am good?

16 And *thus* said Jesus at the conclusion of this parable, You see (as I have just been telling you, Mat. xix. 30.) there are some who seemed to be *the last* in privileges and advantages, who *shall be first* in the reward and happiness that shall be given to them; *and*, on the other hand, there are many in those respects *the first*, who shall be *last*. And this is a remark peculiarly applicable to the Jewish nation,[i] who will murmur at the calling of the Gentiles to equal dignities and privileges with themselves, and on that account will reject the gospel, and persecute you the preachers of it: *for* though *many are called*, and the messages of salvation are sent to vast multitudes, even to all the thousands of Israel, yet there are *but few chosen*;[k] a small remnant only will embrace the gospel so universally offered, and so be saved according to the election of grace, (Rom. xi. 5.) while the rest will be justly disowned by God, as a punishment for so obstinate and so envious a temper.

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

son concerned, I apprehend they would argue directly contrary to the whole design of this parable, and to what daily appears to be fact, which therefore cannot give way to any hypothesis.

[h] *Is thine eye evil?*] Here is an evident reference to that malignant aspect which is generally the attendant of a selfish and envious temper.

[i] Peculiarly applicable to the Jewish nation.] The remark itself is far more extensive, as I intimate both in the paraphrase and improvement. But as this was a memorable instance of it, so it is plainly what Christ had immediately in his view.

[k] *Many are called, but few chosen.*] Grotius has a very learned and ingenious note on this text; but no genius or learning can be sufficient to prove what he seems to intend, that persons are called the chosen of God, merely with respect to the Divine complacency in them on account of some distinguished virtue and excellence. Compare Deut. vii. 6—8. ix. 6; John xv. 16; Acts ix. 13, 15; Rom. xi. 5, 6; and 1 John iv. 19.—To understand the expression here of *chosen* or *excellent servants* (as Mr. Le Clerc, Dr. Wall, and many others do,) is quite to contradict the design of the parable. On that supposition the master must have said, "These last have done as "much in one hour as you in many; or "I chose them, because I knew they "were men remarkable for their diligence." This is the turn which the Talmudists have given to the parable in their insipid imitation of it: which may be seen in Dr. Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. on Mat. xx. 1.

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY we by divine grace appear in the happy number of those who are not only *called*, but *chosen* too! If we are *first* in privileges and opportunities, let us be careful that our improvement be proportionable; otherwise we shall be *last*, and see ourselves another day exceeded, and perhaps condemned, by those who stood in a rank much below us. SECT. CXXXVIII. Ver. 25.

We are called to a course of holy *labour*, even to *work in our Lord's vineyard*, or in every station, whether public or private, to do our utmost to promote the glory of God and the happiness of mankind. Let us not, with so many calls and so many advantages, *stand all the day idle*; but let us be active and patient, and cheerfully willing to *bear all the burden and heat of the day* in so good a cause; knowing that ere long *the evening will come*, and that he who employs us saith, *Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.* (Rev. xxii. 12.) 1 6 12 8

Let such as have long neglected the great business of life be encouraged with this thought, that some were *called at the eleventh hour*: but let none presume on their having such a call, nor strain the *parable* so far as to imagine, that an *equal reward* awaits *all*, without any regard to their characters or improvements; which is most contrary to the reason of things, to the word of God, and to the great intent of that day which is *to render to every man according to his deeds.* (Rom. ii. 6.) 6 9

The *Gentiles* are indeed now called to equal privileges with the *Jews*, to which this circumstance of the *parable* refers: and we all see how odious a temper it was in that favourite nation to be *offended* with the *gospel* on that account, which should rather have recommended it to their more joyful acceptance. Let us be careful to avoid every degree of *envy*, whoever may be put on a level with us, or preferred to us. Let us acknowledge the sovereign right of God to *do what he will with his own*, and let not *our eye be evil because he is good.* To prevent this, let us labour after that *unfeigned love to the brethren* which never will allow us to repine at their advancement to the greatest privileges, but will engage us to behold the favours that are shewn them with delight and satisfaction, and to rejoice in their honour and happiness as our own. So shall we exchange the basest and most uneasy *passion* of human nature, for that which is of all others the noblest and the most delightful. 11, 12 15

SECT. CXXXIX.

Our Lord, hearing of the sickness of his friend Lazarus, and afterwards knowing that he was dead, determines to go from the country beyond Jordan to Judea, though against the persuasion of his disciples. John XI. 1—16.

JOHN XI. 1.

SECT. CXXXIX. John XI. 1.

NOW while Jesus was on the other side Jordan, whither he had retired when he left Jerusalem (John x. 40, sect. cxxxiv.), *there was one Lazarus of Bethany*, which was also *the town of Mary, and Martha her sister, who was sick* of a very dangerous distemper. And, by the way it is to be observed, that *it was [that] Mary who* afterwards at a public entertainment, in testimony of her high regard and veneration for him, *anointed the Lord with* a most precious *ointment*,[a] *and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. The sisters therefore*, full of concern for their diseased brother, knowing where Jesus was, *sent to him, and said, Lord*, we beg that thou wouldst be pleased to favour us with a visit, whatever difficulties may lie in the way; for *behold he, whom thou* so tenderly *lovest*, even Lazarus thy friend, *is* so exceedingly *ill*, that, without thy interposition for his deliverance, nothing but death can be expected.

But when Jesus heard [it], he said, This sickness is not designed by providence *to* end in his *death*, and final removal out of this world;[b]

JOHN XI. 1. NOW a certain man was sick, *named* Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto

[a] *It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment.*] Some commentators have supposed that this refers to the story related by Luke, chap. vii. 37, *&c. seq.* (sect. lx.) and have argued from thence, that Mary Magdalene, whom they think to be the person there described as a woman that was a sinner, was the same with this Mary, the sister of Lazarus. But it seems much more probable, that John himself should mention the fact that he has here referred to; which, if he has done at all, it must be that which he relates, John xii. 3, *&c. seq.* (sect. cxlv.) where there can be no doubt but that the person who performed this instance of respect to Christ was Mary, the sister of Lazarus, who was of Bethany near Jerusalem, and therefore must be different from Mary Magdalene, who was of Magdala, a town of Galilee at a considerable distance. Nor is there any ground from scripture to conclude that Mary Magdalene was the person who anointed Christ in Luke, which appears rather to be there described as the action of a woman of Naim, where Christ restored the widow's son to life (Luke vii. 37). (Compare note[b] on Luke viii. 2, Vol. I. p. 534.)—Besides, the stories are related with such different circumstances, that it is strange they should be taken for the same fact; and as Luke no where tells us that the person he speaks of was named Mary, so neither have we any reason to suppose that the same person should anoint him twice.

[b] *This sickness is not to death*, &c.] Compare Mat. ix. 24, and Mark v. 39, Vol. I. p. 399.—Our Lord afterwards so fully ex-

death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

but shall serve *for* the remarkable illustration of *the glory of God*, and is suffered to prevail, chiefly with a design *that the Son of God may be glorified by it*, and his divine mission most signally confirmed. SECT. CXXXIX. John XI. 4.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

Now it was well known that *Jesus loved Martha, and her sister* Mary *and* this their brother *Lazarus*, with a peculiar affection, and had often visited them, and lodged at their house; and, in consequence of this, he was determined to order the affair in such a manner as he knew would be most for their final advantage, though it might for a while be an occasion of greater affliction. 5

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

When therefore he had heard that he was sick, he then, without declaring he had any thought of going to him, *abode* yet *two days* longer on the other side Jordan, *in the* same *place where he was* before. 6

7 Then after that, saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judea again,

And *then after that*, that is, on the third day, *he says to his disciples, Let us now go* back *again to Judea*.[c] 7

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

The disciples say unto him, Rabbi, it is *but* just *now* that *the Jews sought to stone thee*, (John x. 31, sect. cxxxiv.) *and dost thou* intend so soon to *go thither again*, as if it were to tempt the danger from which thou hast so lately with such difficulty escaped? 8

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? Now *if any man* take the advantage of them, and *walk in the day, he* is prepared for all events, and *does not stumble* at any obstacle which may lie in his way; *because* the sun is then above the horizon, and *he sees the light of this world.* 9

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

But if any man will rather choose to *walk in the night*, it is no wonder at all if *he stumbles* then, *because there is no light in* the 10

plains what he meant by this ambiguous speech, that nothing reasonable can be objected to it: but it is a remarkable instance of the candour and fidelity of the evangelists here, and in the fore-cited places, so exactly to record the very words of Jesus, though malice might so easily cavil at them.

[c] *After that he says to his disciples*, &c.] From comparing Mat. xx. 17; Mark x. 32; and Luke xviii. 31 (sect. cxlii.) many critics infer, that what is recorded there and in the following verses happened during the interval of Christ's delay to go to Bethany, after he had heard that Lazarus was sick: but I do not find that Christ went to Jerusalem now; and if he did, it seems that those events happened in his very last journey thither, and consequently should not be introduced here; especially as they break the thread of the story, out of regard to which, I think, some small transpositions may well be allowed in other places, though none be needful here.

SECT. CXXXIX. air around *him*. In like manner, I am desirous, as I lately told you, to do the will of my heavenly Father while the day of opportunity of life lasts, (John ix. 4, sect. cxxx.) and I doubt not but I shall thereby approve myself in his sight, and secure his protection and favour.

John XI. 10

11 *These things he said* to silence their objections, and to prepare their minds for what he yet concealed: *and after this*, as he perfectly knew what had passed at Bethany, though so many miles distant from it, *he says to them, Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I am going* to him, *that I may awaken him;* thereby referring to his death, and to that raising him from it which he intended quickly to effect.

11 These things said he: and after that, he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 *His disciples therefore*, not apprehending his meaning, immediately *said, Lord, if he sleeps* naturally and quietly, as thou seemest to intimate, *he will* probably *recover;* and there is the less reason for thy running the hazard of going thither to heal him.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep he shall do well.

13 *But Jesus spake* this *concerning his death*, which for many apparent reasons he chose to represent under this gentle image;[d] *but they thought that he had spoken of* his *taking rest* as a living man does *in* a common *sleep*.

13 Howbeit, Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 *Then Jesus therefore*, that he might not hold them any longer in suspence, or leave them under a mistake, *said to them plainly, Lazarus is* indeed *dead*.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 *And*, as I could not have permitted this to have happened in my presence, *I am glad on your account that I was not there; that you may* more confidently *believe* in me, and may find your faith confirmed by a farther

15 And I am glad for your sakes, that I was not there, (to the intent ye may be-

[d] For many apparent reasons he chose to represent under this gentle image.] Our Lord might choose the expression of Lazarus sleeping, partly out of tenderness, as being least shocking, when he spoke of so dear a friend, as Homer, when he represents Antilochus as reporting the death of Patroclus to Achilles, used the word κεῖται, *he is fallen*, rather than *he is slain*: (Iliad, lib. xviii. ver. 20.) And it may also farther be considered as an instance of our Lord's modesty: he does not immediately say, "*He is dead*, and I "go by my almighty power to burst the "bonds of the sepulchre, and to command him back to life again;" but, avoiding all parade and ostentation, he chooses the simplest and humblest expression that can be thought of. This fine remark (which Mr. Blackwell makes in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 297,) is admirably illustrated, in a great variety of particulars in the present story, by the ingenious Dr. Lardner in his Vindication of it. He has treated the subject with a candour and rectitude of heart, equal to the accuracy of his critical skill, and even equal to that malignity and baseness of soul with which Woolston attacked it

lieve;) nevertheless, let us go unto him.

remarkable display of my Divine power, in some respects exceeding any thing you have yet seen: *but let us* now *go* directly *to him* at Bethany. SECT. CXXXIX. John XI. 16.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Then Thomas, who was also *called Didymus, said to his fellow-disciples* and brethren in the apostolic office, Since our dear Master will expose himself to so much danger among his inhuman enemies in Judea, *let us also go*, though it be only *that we may die with him*; for whatsoever he may suffer, it is infinitely better we should take our portion with him, even in death, than that we should desert such a friend in an article of the extremest danger.

IMPROVEMENT.

How happy was this family of *Lazarus* in which *Christ* was so frequent a guest! how happy *Lazarus* and his *sisters*, who were so peculiarly *beloved* by him! Yet *sickness* and death invaded that family; and this excellent man, as it should seem, in flourishing circumstances (ver. 19,) and perhaps too in early youth, was snatched away on a sudden, by what appeared a very untimely stroke. The *friends* of *Christ* must *be sick and die* as well others; and *no man knoweth either love, or hatred, by all that is before them* under the sun; (Eccles. ix. 1.) Let us therefore *judge nothing before the time;* (1 Cor. iv. 5.) This *sickness* and *death* of *Lazarus* was *for the glory of God:* and may all our personal and domestic sufferings be so! "To "this, O Lord, may our *life* be consecrated, and to this may "our *death* be subservient! We shall not then feel our dying "pangs in half their bitterness, when our hearts are enflamed "with a zeal for thy glory, and when we see that even those "pangs are promoting it." Ver. 5. 1, 3, 14 4

Our Lord delayed his coming to this dear friend in his extremity; and perhaps it occasioned, not only many an anxious, but many a suspicious thought both to *Lazarus* and his sisters; yet the intent of *this delay* was both gracious and important. Let us not *limit* our Divine Master as to the time or manner of his appearance for us: let us not censure him if it be for a while put off. It is to exercise our faith and patience, and to make the mercy more signal and more welcome. 6

At length a resolution is formed to *go into Judea;* though but a little while ago the *Jews* had assaulted him, even in a sacred place, with burning malice in their hearts, and the instruments of death in their hands. But when Providence called, *none of these things* could *move* our blessed Redeemer, *neither counted he his life dear unto him, that he might finish his course with joy.* (Acts xx. 24.) May we shew the like intrepidity of soul in his 7, 8, 15

SECT. CXXXIX. Vers. 9, 10, 11

service! *walking in the day*, that we *may not stumble*, and taking all proper opportunities of performing the duties of life while the season of it lasts; and then, when *the night* of death *comes*, it will close our eyes in peaceful slumbers. The *repose* of the breathless *corpse*, insensible of alarms, and sorrows, and cares, will be a lovely emblem of the sweet *repose* of the *soul* in the arms of Divine love, till ere long *Christ* shall come to *awaken us out of* our *sleep*, by that *general resurrection* of which *this of Lazarus* was a figure and pledge.

16 Let these glorious thoughts and expectations animate us to all the returns of affection, duty, and zeal. Let them teach us the temper of *Thomas* when he said, *Let us go and die with him.* "Blessed *Jesus!* how much better is it to *die with and* "*for* thee, who art *the resurrection and the life*, than to pro- "long these wretched days of absence, meanness, and affliction, "by forsaking thee when thou art leading us into danger!"

SECT. CXL.

Our Lord raises Lazarus from the dead after he had been buried four days. John XI. 17—46.

JOHN XI. 17.

SECT. CXL. John XI. 17.

THEN Jesus, according to the resolution he had declared to his disciples (ver. 7, 15,) departed from the country beyond Jordan, where he had continued for some time, and went towards Bethany; and *when he came* near the village, he *found that* his friend Lazarus was dead, and that *he had been now four days in the tomb.*

JOHN XI. 17. THEN when Jesus came, he found that he had lien in the grave four days already.

18 *Now Bethany*, the place where Lazarus had lived, *was* very *near to Jerusalem*, being but *about fifteen furlongs off*, (or somewhat less than two miles;) so that he was well known in the

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off.)

19 city, and had many friends there. *And many of the Jews* who dwelt there,[a] when the funeral was over, *came to Martha and Mary*,[b] *that*

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary,

[a] *Many of the Jews*, &c.] It might be one reason why Jesus delayed his coming till the fourth day, that he might meet a great number of them, as, for wise purposes, he determined to make this miracle very public.

[b] *Came to Martha and Mary.*] The original has ἵνα πρὸς τὰς περὶ Μάρθαν καὶ Μαρίαν; but the learned Revius, in his Notes on Valla on this text, has produced incontestible authorities to vindicate our version here, and to shew that there is no need to render or paraphrase it as Beza and Wetius would do, "That the men "came to join with those female friends "who had before attended the mourning sisters, and were now with them." The word Ἰουδαίων, Jews, to be sure

to comfort them concerning their brother.

they might comfort them concerning the loss of *their* beloved *brother*.[c]

SECT. CXL.

John XI. 20

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

And Jesus was no sooner come into the neighbourhood, but presently the news of his approach was brought to the afflicted family that had so long been impatiently desirous to see him. *Martha therefore, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming*, immediately *went out to meet him: but Mary*, who was mourning with her friends in private, was not as yet informed of his approach, and [*still*] *sat weeping in the house*.[d]

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Then Martha, being told where she might 21
meet with him, and having hastened to the place, *said unto Jesus, Lord*, we have been much surprised at thy delay, and cannot but be exceedingly troubled at it, that thou didst not immediately take notice of the message that we sent thee; for, surely, *if thou hadst been here, my* dear *brother had not died*, but would have been given back to thy prayers, which in so many instances have been successful even for the recovery of strangers.

22 But I know, that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

But even now I 22
know, that whatsoever thou shalt think fit to *ask of God*, it shall assuredly be granted; and I am satisfied that *God will give* [*it*] *thee*, however great the favour be, if there be any method to repair the grievous loss we have sustained.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Jesus, beholding her distress with a compas- 23
sionate concern, *says to her*, Martha, do not abandon thyself to overwhelming grief; for I assure thee that *thy* beloved *brother shall rise again* from the dead.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Then *Martha*, conceiving some secret and 24
trembling hope from these words, yet desiring some farther confirmation of it, *says to him*, Lord, *I* well *know*, and stedfastly believe, *that he shall rise again in the* general *resurrection at the last day*; (compare chap v. 29, and Luke xiv. 14;) but the distance of that leaves me still under a load of sorrow.

includes persons of both sexes.—See also Raphel. Not. ex Xenoph. p. 137.

[c] *That they might comfort them*, &c.] Many ceremonies used by the ancient Jews in mourning for the dead, and in comforting the mourners are collected by Dr. Lightfoot (in his Hor. Hebr. on this place; but the mention of them here would be tedious, rather than edifying.

[d] *Sat weeping in the house.*] She probably sat on the ground, which was the posture of mourners. Compare Job ii. 8; Ezek. viii. 14; and Mat. xxvii. 61.

SECT. CXL. John XI. 25

Jesus then *said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life*; (compare chap. v. 21, and Deut. xxx. 20;) by me the general resurrection shall be accomplished, and by me a most glorious and happy life shall be given to all my people, and be maintained even to eternal ages: *he* therefore *that believes in me, though he be dead,* yet he *shall* ere long *live* again, and his re-animated body shall be again united to that soul which in its separate state continues its dependence on my power and faithfulness; and even at present I can loose the bonds of death, and though thy brother now is holden by it, I can recall him when I please to life: *And every one that is* now *living, and believes in me, shall never die*:[e] death shall be so disarmed and transformed, that it shall hardly deserve the name; the better part of him being immediately conveyed to immortal life and glory, and the body only sleeping awhile in the dust, till I come to awaken it to everlasting vigour and joy. *Dost thou,* Martha, *believe this* to be true?

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

26 And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 And *she says to him, Yes, Lord, I* firmly *believe* every thing thou savest; for I am fully persuaded, *that thou art the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world,* and has been so long promised, expected, and desired; and that all power therefore must belong to thee.

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 *And* Martha *having said these* [*words,*] and testified her faith, Jesus inquired for her sister; and presently *she went away, and called her sis-*

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister se-

[e] *That is living and believing in me, shall never die.*] The sense that I have given in the paraphrase appears to me the most consistent sense that can be made of these remarkable words, and the equivalent passages: John v. 24, and viii. 51. And a very sublime and important sense it is, perfectly agreeable to the height of sentiment and language with which Christ is said elsewhere to have *abolished death,* and to have *destroyed the devil,* (2 Tim. i. 10. and Heb. ii. 14.) and with which Christians are said to be *come to the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly and church of the first-born,* &c. Heb. xii. 22, 25;) and to be *raised up with Christ, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* (Eph. ii. 6.) See Vitring. Observ. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 7, § 9—18.—To render the words before us, as Mr. Massey would do, (Vernac. Sacra. p. 8.) "*Whoever, while he lives, believes on me,* "*shall not die for ever,* or eternally," is both obscuring and enervating their sense, and (as I have shewn elsewhere, note[t] on John iv. 14, Vol. I. p. 170. and notes [b], [c], on John viii 51, 52, Vol. II. p. 76, 77.) is grounded on a criticism which cannot agree with the use of the phrase in question in parallel passages. Compare Mat. xxi. 19 sect. cxlix.—The opposition between this and the preceding verse plainly shews, that the former refers to the spirits of those who were dead, who are yet spoken of as believing in Christ; and is, I think, no contemptible proof of their remaining in a state of activity: but the doctrine is so very plain in scripture, as not to need the aid of such consequential arguments.

SECT. CXL. John XI. 29.

cretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

ter Mary as *privately* as she could, whispering in her ear, and *saying*, *The Master is hard by, and calleth for thee.* And *as soon as she heard* [*it*] *she immediately arose, and*, having left the company that were about her, *came* forward with the utmost eagerness *to* meet *him.*

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

Now Jesus was not yet entered into the village, but still *continued in the place where Martha met him*, waiting there for Mary's coming. 30

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave, to weep there.

The Jews then who were with her in the house, attempting *to comfort her* under her sorrow, *seeing that Mary arose up hastily and went out* of doors, *followed her*, *saying*, *Surely she is going to the sepulchre* of her brother, *that she may weep there*,[t] which will only aggravate and renew her sorrow; let us therefore endeavour to dissuade her from it. And thus, by their going after her, they were naturally led to be eye-witnesses of all that followed. 31

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Then Mary, *when she came* to the place *where Jesus was*, *and saw him*, was so far from being afraid to avow her regards to him, (compare John ix. 22, sect. cxxx.) that she *fell down at his feet*, and embraced them with the greatest respect, *saying to him*, as her sister had done before, *Lord*, *if thou hadst been here*, sooner, surely *my* dear *brother had not died.* And she was so overcome with grief, that she could utter no more. 32

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the Spirit, and was troubled,

Jesus therefore, *when he saw her* thus *weeping*, *and the Jews* also *weeping that came with her*, *groaned* with a deep concern, as feeling a strong commotion *in* his own *spirit*; *and* judging it proper in this instance to indulge it, (though he always had every passion under the most entire command), he voluntarily *afflicted himself* by opening his mind to a set of melting and painful ideas. 33

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.

And looking with a tender pity on the mourning relations of his deceased friend, *he said*, *Where have ye laid him? They say unto him*, *Lord*, we desire thou wouldst *come and see*; wishing to bring him to the sepulchre, in some uncertain hope of what was afterwards done. 34

[t] *She is going to the sepulchre, that she may weep there.*] How customary this was among the ancients is particularly observed by Elsner, Observ. Vol. p. 330.

SECT. CXI.

John XI. 35.

And as they were going along, *Jesus* himself *wept*, at the remembrance of the dead, in sympathy with the living, and in compassion to the obstinate Jews, whose final impenitence he foresaw, and knew how much the guilt of it would be aggravated in consequence of their being spectators of such a miracle.

35 Jesus wept

36 *The Jews therefore*, seeing him in tears, *said*, *Behold, how he loved him*, and how his heart overflows with sorrow for his death. *But some of them*, who had a secret aversion to him *said*, *Could not this man, who* is said to have *opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that this man also should not have died?* Could he not have come to cure him, or, as it is reported in some other instances, have effected it even at a distance?

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 *Jesus therefore*, understanding this invidious insinuation, and *groaning again within himself*, as in great anguish of heart, *comes to the sepulchre*. Now *it was a cave, and a* large *stone was laid upon* the mouth of *it*. *Jesus says* to them that stood by, *Remove the stone* which stops up the entrance:[g] but *Martha, the sister of the deceased says to him*, *Lord*, he has been dead so long, that *he now smells* in an offensive manner;[h] *for he has been* [*here*] no less than part of *four days*, this being the fourth since his interment.

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 (Compare ver. 17:) *Jesus says to her*, Why dost thou object against what I direct? *Did I not say unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God* remarkably displayed in a work of signal power and mercy?

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?

41 Then they took

[g] *Jesus says, remove the stone*, &c.] Our Lord (as Bishop Hall justly observes) could with infinite ease have commanded the stone to roll away of itself, without employing any to remove it; but he judiciously avoided all unnecessary pomp and parade, and mingled all the majesty of this astonishing miracle with the most amiable modesty and simplicity.—There is no reason to imagine, as some do, that the stone lay on the top of the cave, and that the corpse was let down with cords; for then Lazarus could not, without a farther miracle, have ascended of himself. It is much more reasonable to believe the entrance was at the side of the sepulchre. Mr. Maundrel tells us (in his journey to Jerusalem, p. 79) that the ruins of Lazarus's house are still shewn, and not far from thence his sepulchre, into which there is a descent of twenty-five steep stairs, which lead into two small rooms, in the farther of which the body is said to have been laid. But one cannot much depend on the genuineness of such antiquities. See Sands's Travels, p. 196.

[h] *He has been dead so long that he now smells*, &c.] The word ὀζει has the same ambiguity with this which I have used, and seems rather more decent than that in our translation, though the meaning is plainly the same.—Martha's mind seems to have been in a painful struggle, tossed with a variety of passions, which prevented a perfect consistency in her behaviour.

away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lift up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee, that thou hast heard me.

Then they took away the stone from the mouth of the tomb *where the deceased lay.* SECT. CXL.

And when it was removed, *Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee, that thou hast* graciously *heard me* in those secret groanings of soul which I have been pouring forth in thy presence: *And* indeed *I knew that* John XI. 41

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by, I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

thou always hearest me, and art most ready to answer all my petitions; *but I* now *speak* [*thus*], *because of the multitude that is standing by, that they*, comparing what they hear with what they are now to behold, *may* have increasing and more effectual engagements to *believe that thou hast sent me.* 42

43 And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And having said these words, he cried with a loud voice, suitable to the majestic part which he was now acting, and the dominion he had even in the empire of death itself, as well as that he might be heard by all the multitude that were present, *Lazarus, come forth.* 43

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

And such an almighty energy went along with his word, that immediately, according to his command, *he that was dead came forth, bound* (as the dead usually were) *about* [*his*] *feet and hands with grave-clothes*, or with several rolls and foldings of linen that were wrapt about him, but which were so far loosened by the power of Christ as to permit him to move; *and his face was* also *bound about with a napkin.*[1] And *Jesus*, on his coming forth in this confined posture, *says to them* that stood by, *Unbind him, and let him go:* for nothing more was needful to be done in a miraculous way, and he had strength enough to walk, his health and vigour being perfectly recovered with his life. 44

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Thus was this illustrious miracle completely and publicly accomplished: and such was the effect of it, that *many of the Jews therefore, who had come to* visit *Mary, and beheld what Jesus did*, were so affected with this marvellous instance of his power, that they *believed on him* as the Messiah. 45

46 But some of

But some of them were so ob- 46

[1] *His face was bound about with a napkin.*] If the Jews buried as the Egyptians did, the face was not covered with it, but it only went round the forehead and under the chin, so that on his returning to life, he might easily see his way out of the sepulchre.

SECT. CXL. John XI. 46

stinate and perverse, that they *went away to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done*,[k] on purpose that they might inflame them, and stir them up to take some method to prevent his growing influence among the people.

them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 25. LET us, by faith, continually regard *Jesus* (as his discourses and actions concur to represent him) as *the resurrection and the life*; believing on this glorious specimen here given of it, that he can, and will finally cause *all that are in the graves* to *hear his voice, and* to *come forth*; (John v. 28, 29.) A most delightful thought, which we should often apply both to ourselves and to our pious friends! Let the consideration, that they are to *arise in the resurrection at the last day*, moderate our sorrows
24 for their removal, and forbid *our mourning as others that have no hope*: (1 Thess. iv. 13.) Were *a resurrection on earth* expected, though at the distance of several years, we should consider them only as persons absent on a long journey, and expect their return with patience and cheerfulness: but oh, how much more certain is *the resurrection of the just*, than the issue of any of our journeys or expectations in life.

31 We often *go*, in our thoughts at least, *to the grave to weep*; but let us not forget to raise our contemplations higher, even
35 *Jesus*, who here expressed such tender sentiments of compassion, and *wept* when he saw the *tears* of others, though he knew he was going to *wipe them away* by restoring that friend whom they
38 lamented.—*He afflicted himself*, and it may be proper for us sometimes to do it, and to hold down our thoughts to those views of things which may give us pain and regret; if that attention be so adjusted and attempered as only to produce *a sadness of the countenance* that may *improve the heart*. (Eccles. vii. 3.)

39 Let the *modesty* with which *our Lord* conducted this grand and solemn scene, teach us to avoid all mean transports of self-ap-
41, 42 plause, and all fondness for ostentation and parade. Like *Jesus*, let us *in all our ways acknowledge God*, and maintain a continual dependence on his influence, to be sought by fervent *prayer*; and then we may go forth to every duty with a courageous and cheerful assurance that he will carry us honourably and
40 comfortably through it. Let us but stedfastly *believe*, and we shall *see the glory of God*: he will manifest his power for our help;

[k] *Went away to the Pharisees*, &c.] We * mark, *If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.* Luke xvi. 31. have in this a most amazing instance of incorrigible hardness of heart, and a dreadful confirmation of our Lord's re-

* Sect. cxxv.

and when our case appears to be remediless, then is the time for his almighty hand to save. SECT. CXL.

Let us adore and trust in *him*, who was armed with so divine a power, as to be able to rescue *the prisoners of death*, and to recover the trophies of the all-conquering and devouring *grave*. And if we are true *believers*, let us learn to take our part in the triumph, with a joyful assurance, that though we *putrefy* in the dust, and *after the skin worms devour our bodies, yet in our flesh we shall* at length *see God.* (Job xix. 26.) Ver. 43, 44 26 39

It was surely a happy time that succeeded all the lamentations of these affectionate mourners. With what mutual congratulations, and unutterable endearments, did *Lazarus* and *his sisters* behold each other! With what humble gratitude and adoration, did they all prostrate themselves at the feet of their *Almighty Saviour!* But who can conceive the greater transports which shall run through the whole redeemed world at the *resurrection day*, when piety and friendship shall be perfected, and those who were dearest to each other, both in the bonds of nature and of grace, shall spring up together to an immortal undivided life! In the mean time, let us *trust our friends with him*, (with whom, if we are *Christians indeed*, we have trusted our souls,) believing that the separations he appoints are prudent and kind, and that even our prayers for their recovery are denied in mercy.

SECT. CXLI.

The sanhedrim being informed of the resurrection of Lazarus, by the advice of Caiaphas, agree that Jesus should be put to death. He retires to Ephraim, and they issue an order for apprehending him. John XI. 47, *to the end.*

JOHN XI. 47.

JOHN XI. 47. THEN gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What

IT was before observed, (at the close of the last section,) that some who had been present at the resurrection of Lazarus, instead of being duly wrought upon by the miracle, went away and made an invidious report of it to the Pharisees: *the chief priests therefore and the Pharisees*, who were united in their enmity to Christ, being exceedingly alarmed at so astonishing an information, *convened the sanhedrim*, which was the great council of the Jewish nation, *and said, What are we doing* in this strange conjuncture of affairs? and why do we seem to be dreaming, when things are come to such a crisis? It is of absolute necessity that some effectual method SECT. CXLI. John XI. 47

SECT. CXLI.

should immediately be taken; *for* it is not to be denied that, by some means or other, *this man*, whom we have been so solicitous to suppress,
John XI. 47 *does many* of the most surprising *miracles* that
48 were ever seen or heard of: And *if we suffer him* [*to go on*] *thus* uncontrouled, *all* the populace *will believe on him* as the promised Messiah, and will acknowledge him as the king of Israel; *and* what can we expect will be the consequence of this, but that the power of *the Romans*, so vastly superior to ours, will be armed against us, and their legions *will come and take away both our place and nation;* they will destroy Jerusalem, and this sacred temple where we are now assembled, and will extirpate all the people who are committed to our guardianship and care.

do we? for this man doth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 *And*, while some of the council seemed apprehensive of the danger of attempting any thing against Jesus, *one of them* [*even*] *Caiaphas*, *who*, among the many sudden revolutions which happened in the government about that time, *was high-priest that year* in which Christ was crucified[a] *said to them*, while they were thus deliberating, *You* seem to *know nothing at all* of what the present urgency of affairs requires, or you would easily find out a remedy in the death of
50 this Jesus, who occasions such an alarm: *Nor* is this to be scrupled, because he does not appear to have committed any crime which is made capital by our law; for *do you* not *consider* that the extreme danger of a state will justify such extraordinary steps as are necessary for its preservation; and *that it is* undoubtedly much *better for us*, *that one* innocent *man should die for the* security of the *people*, *than that the whole nation* he belongs to *should perish* by our scrupling to take away his life?

49 And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high-priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all.

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

51 *Now this*, by the way, was a very remarkable saying; and it is to be observed, that *he spake* it *not* merely *of himself*, *but being high-priest that year*, and so a person of the greatest dignity and authority, he was moved by a secret

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high-priest

[a] *Was high-priest that year.*] It is well known, that the high-priesthood among the Jews was not annual; but the many revolutions about that time might justify such a manner of speaking, which signifies no more than *in those days*, or *at that time*. (Compare Deut. xxvi. 3; Josh. xx. 6; Ezek. xxxviii. 8; and Mal. iii. 4.) See Dr. Lardner's Credibility, Part I. Vol. II. p. 878, 879.

that year, he prophesied that Jesus, should die for that nation.

impulse from God to utter these words, which might be esteemed as an oracle, and were capable of a much higher sense than he apprehended; and by them *he* in effect *prophesied*[b] *that Jesus should shortly die for the* security, redemption, and happiness of the Jewish *nation:* SECT. CXLI. John XI. 51

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

And indeed, *not for the* Jewish *nation alone, but* for all the nations of the earth, even *that he also might gather together into one* glorious and happy society all *the* chosen *children of God that are dispersed abroad* in the most distant places and ages, among the Gentiles as well as the Jews. 52

53 Then from that day forth they took council together for to put him to death.

From that very *day, therefore,* the members of the sanhedrim in general (though some particular persons were averse to their proceedings,) having thus resolved upon the death of Jesus, sought for an opportunity to execute the malicious purpose *they* had formed, and *united their counsels, that they might* find out some convenient method to *slay him.* 53

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence into a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

For this reason Jesus, who knew the secret resolution they had formed to take away his life, *walked no more openly among the Jews* in those parts till the appointed hour for his suffering was come; *but,* instead of visiting Jerusalem, he *went away from thence,* even from Bethany where he now was, *into the country near the wilderness* of Judea, *to a* little *city called Ephraim,*[c] which lay not far from Bethel on the confines of the tribe of Benjamin; *and there he continued* a while *with* a few of *his* select *disciples,* and afterwards took a little journey eastwards, towards the banks of the river Jordan,[d] from whence he had lately 54

[b] *Being high priest that year, he prophesied.*] The Jewish high priests had in former ages been often under the inspiration of a prophetic spirit: there was therefore some peculiar congruity in putting this oracle into his mouth, and the dignity of his office would add some peculiar weight and regard to what he said. —It is a strange fancy of Dr. Lightfoot, that Caiphas knew Jesus to be the Messiah, and that the sanhedrim founded their apprehension of danger from the Romans, in consequence of the regard shewn to him, on a ridiculous interpretation of Isa. x. *ult.* and xi. 1, whence they inferred that the destruction of the temple should quickly succeed the coming of the Messiah. See his Hor. Hebr. on John xi. 48. 51,

[c] *To a city called Ephraim.*] This city (which is mentioned with Bethel, 2 Chron. xiii. 19.) is by some called Ephrem, and is generally supposed to have lain in the north-east part of the lot of Benjamin. See Reland's Palestin. p. 376, and compare note [a] on Luke xiii. 23. p. 134.

[d] *Took a little journey eastward, &c.*] This we have reason to suppose, or Jericho would not have lain in his way to Jerusalem, which yet we find that Jesus passed through in his return. See Luke xix. 1. sect. cxliii.

SECT. CXLI. come to Bethany on account of Lazarus's death.

John XI. 55 *And* soon after this *the Jewish passover drew near; and many went up from* all parts of *the country to Jerusalem*, some little time *before the passover, that they might purify themselves* by some preparatory sacrifices,[c] in order to be ready for the celebration of that solemn festival.

55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 (Compare 2 Chron. xxx. 17.) *Then*, as the people came together, *they* diligently *sought for Jesus* there, some of them being desirous to see and hear him, and others wanting to discover him to his avowed enemies the Pharisees: and as it could not but be generally known that the surprising miracle which he had lately wrought had very much inflamed the rage and envy of his persecutors, they were suspicious whether he would venture to appear in public, *and said one to another, as they stood in the temple, What think ye* of his coming to the passover? Do you suppose *that*, after this alarm, *he will not* have

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 the courage to *come to the feast? But both the chief priests and the Pharisees*, concluding that he would not fail to come according to his usual custom, no longer dissembled their malice, but published a mandate, by which they *had given* an express *command, that if any one knew where he was, he should* immediately *declare* [*it*] to them, *that they might apprehend*, and bring *him* to his trial, as a disturber of the public peace, and a person dangerous to the state.

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 47 WHERE shall we find such restless, such causeless, such incorrigible malice, as was in the hearts of these *rulers* against our blessed *Saviour?* What but divine grace can reclaim men, when to have heard of the *resurrection of Lazarus* from their own friends and confidents, who had just been eye-witnesses of it, instead of conquering their hearts, served only to inflame their murderous rage!

48, 50 This is an instance, where we evidently *see the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there*, (Eccles. iii. 16.) The *high-priest* lays

[c] *That they might purify themselves* by some preparatory sacrifices.] Dr. Lightfoot (in his Hor. Hebr. on this place) has shewn, that as a variety of circumstances might happen to multitudes which would require purification, so some sort of cleansing required no less than seven days.

down a most dangerous, though plausible maxim, which is in effect no other than this, "That the *murder of* an innocent person by forms of law," (which, as *a noble sufferer* observed, is surely the worst kind of murder,) "nay, even of a person "who by miracles demonstrated that he was an ambassador "from God, was to be chosen, rather than by protecting and "obeying him, to give umbrage to an earthly power, which "seemed superior to their own." When will the *politicians* of this earth learn to *trust God* in his own ways, rather than to trust themselves, and their own wisdom, in violation of all the rules of truth, honour, and conscience? Till then, like this foolish *ruler*, they will be *caught in their own craftiness;* and it is more than possible, that they may, in many instances, hasten the very distress they are contriving to avoid. For this was here the event: the *Romans*, (called therefore *the people of Messiah the Prince*, Dan. ix. 26.) were sent as executioners of the Divine vengeance, and the *Jews* were given up to a spirit of discord and madness, the terrible effects of which were such as cannot be read without horror, till *their place and nation were taken away;* nor could even the *Roman general* forbear declaring, that the *hand of God* was apparent in their destruction. SECT. CXLI.

Let us attend to this *Divine oracle* which God saw fit to put into the mouth of so wicked a man. *Jesus* has actually *died for the people, even for all the children of God that are scattered abroad.* His death is substituted instead of theirs; and by it they are *redeemed* and delivered, and shall ere long be *incorporated together*, and all the happy colony be raised to an abode of eternal glory. Blessed harvest, which springs up from redeeming blood! Heroic love of the dear Redeemer, which at the proper time brought him to *Jerusalem*, where he knew that *evil was determined against him!* Let us follow him, in a courageous adherence to God and our duty, in the midst of danger and opposition; and not wonder if we are set up as the marks of infamy and reproach, when we see *Jesus* marked out by a *public mandate*, as if he had been a robber or a murderer; and find so numerous and grand a *court of judicature*, requiring their subjects to *seize* this most generous Friend of the whole world, as the grand enemy of God and his country. Verse 51, 52 56, 57

SECT. CXLII.

Christ, setting out on his last journey to Jerusalem, prophesies of his sufferings there; rebukes the ambition of James and John; and renews his exhortations to humility. Mat. XX. 17—28. Mark X. 32—46. Luke XVIII. 31—34.

MARK X. 32.

SECT. CXLII. Mark X. 32.

AT length our Lord departed from the place of his retreat, and though he knew the resolution that his enemies had formed against him, yet he set out with his disciples, and (taking Jericho in his road,) was determined to make his appearance in the temple at the approaching passover: *and as* in pursuance of this design, *they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, Jesus,* to shew his readiness to meet sufferings and death in such a cause, *went before them; and they were* exceedingly *amazed* at the spirit and ardour which he discovered in so dangerous an expedition; *and as they followed* him, *they were afraid,* both for themselves and him. *And,* while their hearts were thus impressed, *he took the twelve disciples again apart to himself,* into a convenient retirement which they met with *by the way, and began* particularly *to tell them what things should befall him* in that important journey, that he might thus prepare them for the sufferings he should undergo, and that the accomplishment of his predictions might be some confirmation to their faith during a series of events which he knew would so severely try it. *And he said to them,*

MARK X. 32.

AND they were in the way going up to Jerusalem: and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed, and as they followed they were afraid. And he took again [LUKE, unto him] the twelve [disciples apart in the way,] and began to tell them what things should happen unto him; [and said unto them,] [MAT. XX. 17.—LUKE XVIII 31.—]

33 *Behold,* and observe what I say; *We are* now *going up to Jerusalem, and* it is the last journey of this kind we shall ever take; for now *all things which are written by the* ancient *prophets concerning* the sufferings of *the Son of man, shall be* exactly *fulfilled; and the Son of man shall be betrayed* by one of his own company, who has professed the greatest duty and affection to him, [*and*] shall be ungratefully *delivered to the chief priests and the scribes,*[a] particularly to those who constitute the sanhedrim, and who have already published so severe an edict

33 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, [LUKE, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished:] and the Son of man [shall be betrayed *and*] delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the

[a] *Shall be betrayed and delivered,* &c.] The word παραδοθησεται is the same both in Matthew and Mark; but plainly includes both his being *betrayed* by Judas and *given up* into the hands of his enemies. I have therefore retained the different words by which our translators render it, in the one place and the other.

scribes: and they shall condemn him to death, [MAT. XX. 18. LUKE XVIII. —31.]

34 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock [LUKE, and spitefully entreat] him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him, [and crucify *him*:] and the third day he shall rise again. [MAT. XX. 19. LUKE XVIII. 32, 33.]

against him; (John xi. 57, sect. cxli.) *and* when they have him thus in their power, *they shall*, with great formality, *condemn him to death* as a public enemy and disturber: *and*, as they have not now the power of capital executions in their own hands, they *shall deliver him* up *to the Gentiles*, even to the Roman governor and his soldiers; *and they*, instigated by the malice of the Jews, and utterly ignorant of the dignity and glory of his person, *shall mock and spitefully entreat him* in the most contumelious and reproachful manner, *and* shall cruelly *scourge him*, *and* carry their rude outrage to such a height, that they shall even *spit upon him; and*, when this scene of mockery is over, they *shall put him to* a most ignominious and painful *death*; *and*, as if he was a common slave, shall even *crucify him*,[b] and leave him to expire in the gradual agonies of the cross: *and* yet all their malice shall not be able to triumph over him; for *on the third day he shall rise again*, victorious over the powers of darkness, and take possession of that glorious and universal kingdom which the prophets assign to the Messiah. (Compare Mat. xvi. 21, sect. lxxxix. and Mat. xvii. 22, sect. xcii.)

SECT. CXLII. Mark X. 34.

LUKE XVIII. 34. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

And, plain as this declaration was, their prejudices were so great, that *they did not understand any of these things* thoroughly, being at a loss to reconcile his being slain, with the possession of that kingdom which he was to inherit; *and this matter was hid from them* to *so* great a degree *that*, after all our Lord had said, *they knew not the meaning of the things which were spoken.* (Compare Luke ix. 44, 45, p. 15.)

Luke XVIII. 34

MAT. XX. 20. Then came to him the mother of Zebe-

Nevertheless they apprehended thus much, that whatever difficulties lay in the way, they should certainly end in his triumph and glory. And upon this presumption *then, the mother of*

Mat. XX. 20

[b] *They shall—scourge him, and spit upon him,—and crucify him.*] This prediction is a remarkable proof of the prophetic Spirit which dwelt in Christ; for, humanly speaking, it was much more probable, that he should have been *privately assassinated*, or *stoned* (as was before attempted), by some zealous transport of popular fury, than that he should have been thus solemnly condemned, and delivered up to crucifixion; a Roman punishment, with which we do not find he had ever been threatened. Indeed, when the Jews condemned him for blasphemy, for which the punishment appointed in the law was stoning, and Pilate at last gave them a general permission to take him and judge him according to their own law, (Mat. xxvi. 65, 66; John xviii. 31; and xix. 7.) it is wonderful they did not choose to stone him: but *all this was done that the scriptures might be fulfilled.* (Compare Mat. xxvi. 56, and John xix. 36.)

SECT. CXLII.

Mat. XX. 20. *Zebedee's children came* at their instigation *to him, with her sons James and John*, who were peculiar favourites of our Lord; and they all three fell down at his feet, *worshipping [him]* in a most respectful manner, *and desiring a certain [favour] of him* with great importunity, weakly *saying, Master, we would* earnestly beg, *that thou shouldest* give us a general promise to *do for us whatsoever we shall request* of thee; for it would be a very great grief to us if we should not succeed in the important petition we have to present.

dee's children, with her sons [James and John,] worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him, [saying, Master, we would that thou should do for us whatsoever we shall desire.] [MARK X. 35.]

Mark X. 36. *And he said to her [and] to them*, You cannot expect that, whatsoever kindness I have for you, I should at all adventures enter myself into so rash an engagement; tell me therefore particularly, *What wouldest thou* have? [*or*] *What would you* so earnestly desire *that I should do for you*, if I was fully disposed to grant your request?

MARK X. 36. And he said [unto her, *and*] unto them, [What wilt thou? *or*] What would ye that I should do for you? MAT. XX. 21.

37 *She says unto him*, I entreat thee to *grant that these my two* dear *sons*, to whom thou hast shewn so much regard, and who are so zealous for thy cause and interest, may be preferred to stations of the highest dignity, trust, and profit; [*and*] *they* joined with her in the same request, and *said, Grant us, that* when thou are established *in thy glorious kingdom*, which, as we apprehend, will shortly be erected in the world, *we may* not only have a place there, but may be fixed near thy throne, and *sit* in distinguished honour and authority, *the one at thy right hand, and the other at thy left*, as thy chief ministers of state.[c]

37 [She saith] him, Grant that my two sons, they said——Grant unto us, that we may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy [kingdom *and*] glory.—[MAT. XX.—21.]

Mat. XX. 22. *But Jesus said to them in reply*, Alas! you are under the force of such carnal prejudices, and mistaken views, that *you know not what you ask*, or you would be ashamed of so unseasonable a petition. This is not a time to think of temporal grandeur and authority; but it is much more proper that I should ask you, and that you should put the question to yourselves,

MAT. XX. 22. But Jesus answered and said [unto them,] Ye know not what ye ask: Are ye able to

[c] *We may sit, the one at thy right hand, and the other at thy left.*] There may perhaps be an allusion in these words, to a circumstance which the Talmudical writers relate concerning the sanhedrim: that there were two officers of peculiar distinction, who sat on each side of the Nasi, or president of the court; the one called Ab Beth Din, or *the father of the justiciary*, who sat on the right hand of the president; the other Chacham, or *the sage*, who sat on the left. See among many other writers on this head, Whits. Miscell. Sacr. Vol. I. lib. ii. Dissert. 3, § 46, 47.

SECT. CXLII

drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? [And] they say unto him, We are able. [MARK X. 38, 39.—]

Are you able to drink of the bitter *cup of which I am* now *about to drink* so deep,[d] *and to be baptized with the baptism*, and plunged into that sea of sufferings *with which I am* shortly [*to be*] *baptised*, and, as it were, overwhelmed for a time? *And they say to him*, with a self-confident assurance, Yes, Lord, we doubt not but that for thy sake *we are able* to undergo all this. Mat. XX. 22

23 And [Jesus] saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup [that I drink of,] and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptised with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father. [MARK X.—39, 40.]

And Jesus says unto them, You shall indeed both of you *drink of* this *my cup of which I* am to *drink*, *and be baptized with the baptism* of extreme sufferings *with which I am* to be *baptized*;[e] for you shall endure great extremities for the sake of my gospel, and hazard your lives in its defence: *but* as to what you have now desired, *to sit on my right-hand, and on my left*, in my kingdom of glory, this *is not* a privilege which is *mine to give* by partial friendship, or to the first and most importunate asker; nor can I dispose of it to any *but* [*to those*] *for whom it is prepared by my Father*, who has appointed that the exaltation and happiness of the other world shall be proportioned to the degrees of piety and holiness which are attained in this. 23

24 And when the ten heard *it*, they [began to be much displeased; *and*] were moved with indignation against the two brethren [James and John.] [MARK X. 41.]

And when the ten other apostles *heard* [*of it*,] and were acquainted with this motion which the sons of Zebedee had made, *they began to be much displeased* that they should aspire to a superiority to which each of them imagined he had himself an equal claim; [*and*] as they *were moved with indignation against the two brethren, James and John*, they were going to expostulate the matter with some severity. 24

[d] *To drink of the cup*, &c.] It was customary among the ancients, to assign to each guest at a feast a particular *cup*, as well as *dish*; and by the kind and quantity of the liquor contained in it, the respect of the entertainer was expressed. Hence cup came in general to signify a portion assigned, (Psal. xvi. 5, xxiii. 5.) whether of pleasure or sorrow; and many instances occur in which it refers to the latter. Compare Psal. xi. 6; lxxiii. 10; Isa. li. 17, 22; Jer. xxv. 15, 17; Zech. xii. 2; John xviii. 11; and Mat. xxvi. 39, 42.

[e] *You shall indeed drink of my cup*, &c.] Accordingly it is observable, that this James was the first of all the apostles who suffered martyrdom for Christ: (Acts xii. 2.) And John was scourged by the Jews; (Acts v. 40.) and afterwards banished by Domitian into the isle of Patmos, where he speaks of himself as *a companion of Christ's tribulation*: (Rev. i. 9.) Not to mention Tertullian's tradition, that at Rome he was plunged into boiling oil; by which it is said, instead of being destroyed, he was sensibly refreshed; (Tertull. Præscript. cap. 36.) nor what the pretended Prochorus says of the attempt made by some heretics to poison him: which is generally referred to in the pictures of this apostle, where the venom is ridiculously represented as coming out of the cup in the form of a serpent, to signify that the poison did not take effect.

SECT. CXLII

Mat. XX. 25

But, to prevent the evil consequences which might arise from such an ill-judged debate, and to root out that envy and ambition which prevailed among them, *Jesus called them* all *to him, and said unto them, You* well *know that the princes of the heathen* nations[f] *lord it over them* in a very imperious manner; *and their great men*, in stations of subordinate government, imitate their tyrannical masters, and *exercise* an arbitrary *authority upon them* that are more immediately subject to their command; and that ambition, which is so natural to the depraved heart of man, engages them eagerly to pursue such distinguished stations which may give
26 them an opportunity to gratify it. *But* my kingdom is of another nature, and *it shall not be so among you*; for, instead of appointing any one among you as the chief who shall govern the rest,[g] I tell you plainly, that you are to look on each other as brethren and equals, or rather, each to esteem others as worthier of regard than himself: indulge not therefore an ambitious temper, *but whosoever would* indeed *be great among you, let him*, instead of aiming at power and authority, choose to *be your minister*, and attend on the rest with all the
27 humblest offices of condescension and love. *And whosoever would be chief among you*, or first in my esteem, and in future honour and happiness, *let him be* ready to behave himself on all occasions as *your servant*; [*yea*,] let him be *the servant*, not only of your little fraternity, but *of all* that are about him;[h] with all humility

25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said [unto them,] Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; and [their great ones] exercise authority upon them. —[MARK X. 42.]

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. - [MARK X. 43.]

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, [*yea*, the servant of all.] [MARK X. 44.]

[f] *The princes of the heathen* nations.] Mark expresses it by οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν, which we render, *they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles*; but this (with Gataker, Cinn. lib. i. cap. 3.) I take to be a pleonasm, and think it should be translated, *They who rule over the Gentiles*; and so it coincides with the clause inserted from Matthew. (Compare 1 Cor xi. 16; xii. 23; xiv. 37; and Phil. iii. 4, Gr.) Instances are produced of the like use of the phrase in the best Greek authors, by Mr. Blackwall, in his sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 74, to which may be added, τοὺς δοκοῦντας ἀδικεῖν, for ἀδικοῦντας, Polyb. lib. i. cap. 5, and τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ δοκούντων, Epictet. Enchirid. cap. 30, § 11.

[g] Instead of appointing any one among you as the chief, &c.] As the request of these two brethren plainly shewed that they did not understand our Lord's words to Peter, (Mat. xvi. 18, 19, § lxxxviii.) as designed to invest him with any *authority* over the rest of his brethren, so the answer which Christ here gives them, far from intimating any thing of that kind, concludes as strongly against any such *authority* as a *negative argument* can be supposed to do, and seems abundantly to justify the turn given in the paraphrase.

[h] *The servant of all.*] There is a gradation here not commonly observed. The word διακονος in the former verse, which, for want of a better word, we render *minister*, is a name which might be given to any who occasionally attended

SECT. CXLII.

submitting to the meanest services, by which he may promote the spiritual interest and benefit of others.

Mark X. 45

MARK X. 45. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. [MAT. XX. 28.]

And wonder not that this should be required of you, when you consider how great an example you have of this temper in him who is so far your superior; *for even the Son of Man* himself, though a person of such illustrious dignity, and constituted to so glorious and lasting a kingdom, *came not to be waited upon, but to serve* others; and was not sent into the world to exercise a temporal dominion, and in a lordly way to rule over men, but to take upon him the form of a servant, and not only to labour, but to die for their good, *and to give his* own *life* as *a ransom for many* who had forfeited theirs to the justice of an offended God. Think not, therefore, that the disciples of such a self-denying Master are to dream of secular power, dominion, and grandeur; but rather study to mortify these very unbecoming desires after it

46—And they came to Jericho.—

And, quickly after this, *they came to Jericho*, 46 where two blind men were cured by Christ, which was soon after followed with the remarkable conversion of Zaccheus, as will be seen in the next section.

IMPROVEMENT.

ASTONISHING grace and compassion of the *Son of God* in going up to *Jerusalem* at this passover, when he so circumstantially knew all the things which were to befall him there! not only that he should be *put to death*, but *in what manner* he should suffer; and what cruelty and what scorn should introduce the last scene of his agonies! Yet, with so sad a prospect in his eye, he marched on with distinguished alacrity, *leading the company*, as if he longed to encounter what they could not bear to see, or even to hear of. Glorious *Captain of our salvation*, give us the like alacrity in all the sufferings we are called to bear for thee!

Mark X. 33, 34

32

Who would not grieve to see these good *apostles* still so much possessed with the spirit of this world, and still dreaming of *pre-*

35, 37

others, or was statedly employed to render them any particular kind of service; but δουλος, *servant*, signifies one whose whole business it is to serve, and who is indeed the property of another. The words, *of all*, do likewise increase the gradation.

SECT. CXLII. *ferment* in a *temporal kingdom?* Who would not especially lament it, that his most intimate friends, *James*, and *John* the beloved disciple, should be the persons who should come to him
Ver. 38. with this strange request? Justly did *our Lord* answer them, *You know not what you ask.* And may not the same answer often be made to *us?* When, therefore, he denies us the *great things* that we are seeking for ourselves, let us be satisfied with the *denial* he sees fit to give us; believing that it is wisdom and love, and not unkindness, that produces it.

38— Let us often ask ourselves, *Can* we *share the sufferings* which *our Lord* endured? If we do not desire to do it so far as he shall appoint, we are not worthy to be called his *disciples.* Let us then *gird up the loins of our minds,* and wait our Master's signal to go forth to any suffering or service that he shall require;
44, 45 ever ready to make ourselves *the servants of all,* and therein to imitate the humility of the *Son of man,* who *came not to be ministered unto, but to minister:* yet, after all we can do or bear for him, let our trusts still be in the merits of his righteousness and blood, who *gave his life a ransom for many.* So shall we be fitted for those distinguished *honours* in the heavenly world, in comparison with which, thrones and sceptres on earth are but empty pageants and childish toys.

SECT. CXLIII.

Our Lord, passing through Jericho in his way to Jerusalem, cures two blind men as he came out from thence, and converts Zaccheus the publican. Mat. XX. 29, *to the end.* Mark X. 46, *to the end.* Luke XVIII. 35, *to the end;* XIX. 1—10.

MARK X. 46.

SECT. CXLIII. AND Jesus, being come to Jericho, proceeded on his journey towards Jerusalem; and being observed by many as he was passing through
Mark X. 46. the city, they were all ready to run after him: *and* accordingly, *as he went out of Jericho with his disciples* in his train, *a great multitude* of other people *followed him.*

MARK X.—46— AND as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, [a great multitude followed him.] [MAT. XX. 29.]

Mat. XX. 30. *And behold,* an occasion offered for a remarkable display of his power and grace at his departure thence; for *it came to pass, that* Providence so ordered it, *as he was* yet *nigh unto Jericho,*[a]

MAT. XX. 30.— And behold, [LUKE, it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho,] Two

[a] *As he was yet nigh unto Jericho.*] In our translation it is rendered, *as he was come nigh unto Jericho;* but the *original,* εν τω εγγιζειν, only signifies, *when,* or *while he was near it:* compare Luke xix. 29; —to which may be added [in confirma-

blind men, [*the one* Bartimeus the son of Timeus, sat by the highway-side, begging.] [MARK X.—46. LUKE XVIII. 35.]

that *Two blind men sat begging by the way-side*, SECT. CXCVII. as beggars used to do in places that are much frequented; [*the one*] of whom was well known by the name of *Bartimeus*, that is, *the son of Timeus*:[b] *And hearing the* noise of a great *multitude passing by, he*, together with his companion, *asked what that* unusual concourse of people *meant*, and how it was occasioned. *And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth*, that celebrated Prophet who had performed so many miracles, *was coming by*, and a vast number of the people of the town were with him. *And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth*, as he had frequently been told what remarkable cures of this kind he had performed in other places, he could not but look upon it as a happy circumstance, that he *was* now *passing by* the very place where he sat; and immediately *he began to cry out* with a loud voice, *and* with great eagerness to *say*, *Jesus, thou Son of David*, thou great and glorious Messiah, pity my sad condition, and *have mercy on me! [yea, they both] cried out, saying* in the same manner, and with one voice, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou* illustrious *Son of David*, and exert thy almighty power to deliver us from this deplorable darkness and distress!

Mat. XX. 30. Luke XVIII. 36. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

Mark X. 47. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth [passed by,] he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me: [*yea, they both* cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.] [MAT. XX.—30. LUKE XVIII. 38.]

Mat. XX. 31. And the multitude, [LUKE which went before,] rebuked them; [and many charged him that he should hold his peace; but they cried the more [a great deal], saying,

And some of *the multitude who went before* Jesus, *rebuked them* for their making such a clamour; *and* as the voice of Bartimeus distinguished itself on this occasion, *many* particularly *charged him that he should be silent*, and not be so importunate and troublesome: *but they*, knowing that if such an opportunity as this was lost it might never return, regarded nothing but the success of their petition, and

Mat. XX. 30. Luke XVIII. 36. 37. Mark X. 47. Mat. XX. 31.

tion of the justice of this remark, which has been called in question by a writer of great eminence in the learned world,] Luke x. 9; xv. 1; xviii. 40; Rom. xiii. 12; and the Septuagint version of Isa. l. 8; Jer. xxiii. 23.—And it is necessary to understand it thus, in order to reconcile Luke's account of this miracle with that of Matthew and Mark, who both expressly say, it was performed *as he departed* or *went out of Jericho*. Some have indeed fancied, that he restored sight to one blind man as he entered in, and to another as he came out, (see Lightfoot's Harmony, § lxix.) but this is improbable, especially considering how the multitude rebuked Bartimeus for his importunity, which surely they would never have done if such a cure as this had but just now been wrought at the other end of the same town.

[b] *The son of Timeus.*] It is very probable Timeus might have been a person of some note in that neighbourhood, whose son, by a complication of calamities, fell both into poverty and blindness

SECT. CXLIII.

therefore *cried out a great deal the more* earnestly, *saying*, as before, *Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David!* and Bartimeus especially repeated it again and again, saying, *Thou Son of David have mercy on me*, and help me!

Mat. XX. 31.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David: [Thou Son of David, have mercy on me.] [Mark X. 48. Luke XVIII. 39.]

Mark X. 49.

And Jesus, as he was advancing forwards in his way, observed how earnestly they cried; and as they still repeated their request, he graciously *stood still, and ordered them* both *to be called* [*and*] *brought to him*, that they might tell him what it was they so earnestly desired. *And* upon this the people had their expectations raised, and as they now concluded that they should see him work a miracle, *they* ran immediately to *call the blind man* and his companion, *saying to him*, as also to the other, *Be of good courage*, and *rise* up, for *he calleth thee* to him; and you may therefore hope that he

Mark X. 49. Luke XVIII. 40.

Mark X. 49. And Jesus stood still, and commanded [them] to be called, [Luke *and* brought unto him:] and they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee. [Mat. XX. 32. — Luke XVIII. 40.—]

50 intends to grant your request. *And* Bartimeus joyfully received the message, and *throwing aside his* upper *garment*, that it might not hinder him a moment, *he arose, and came to Jesus* with all possible haste and eagerness; the other blind man also following as fast as he could.

50 And he casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 *And when he was come near, Jesus*, to try his faith, and to encourage his dependence on his power and goodness, *answered and said unto him*, What is the mercy you so earnestly entreat? or *what dost thou desire I should do for thee? And the blind man said unto him, Rabboni*, that is, my Master and my Lord, the favour which I beg is obvious from the circumstance in which thou seest me, even *that I may* be so happy as to *recover my sight*,[c] the loss of which I cannot but lament as a great calamity to me, from which I know that thou art able to deliver me. The other likewise by this time came up, making the same request; and *they* both joined to *say, Lord*, we beseech thee, *that our eyes might be opened.*

51 And [Luke when he was come near,] Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight: [They say, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.] Mat. XX.—32, 33. Luke XVIII.—40, 41.]

Mat. XX. 34.

Then Jesus had compassion on them both, *and touched their eyes; and*, as a testimony of his approbation of that eminent degree of faith

Mat. XX. 34.— So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes;

[c] *That I may recover my sight.*] Thus the word ἀναβλέψω exactly signifies, and seems to import, that he was not *born blind*, but lost his sight by some disease or accident, which made him so much the more sensible of the calamity. Yet I acknowledge it appears from John ix. 11, 18, that the word is sometimes used in a greater latitude.

[Luke, and said unto him, Receive thy sight,] *and* go thy way; [thy faith hath made thee whole.] [Mark x. 52.—Luke xviii. 42.]

which they had each of them expressed, and Bartimeus in particular in the strongest terms, he *said to him*, and his companion, Be it unto thee as thou hast desired; *receive thy sight*, [*and*] *go thy way; thy faith has saved thee* from the sad condition thou wast in; and if thou continuest to exercise it in a reliance upon me, thy eternal salvation and happiness will be secure. SECT. CXLIII. Mat. XX. 34.

Luke xviii. 43. And immediately [their eyes received sight, and they] followed [Mark, Jesus in the way,] glorifying God: and all the people when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God. [Mat. xx.—34. Mark x.—52.]

And immediately their eyes were opened, and *received sight*, so that they now could see distinctly; *and*, with a grateful sense of their deliverance, *they* joined the company, and *followed Jesus in the way* to Jerusalem, *glorifying God* for this amazing instance of his goodness to them: *and all the people* likewise, *when they saw* [*it*], *gave praise unto God*, who in remembrance of his mercy had sent them so great a Prophet, to appear and act among them under the character of the Son of David. Luke xviii. 43

Luke xix. 1. And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

And presently the news of this surprising miracle was spread abroad; *and* [*Jesus*] *having entered* (as was said before) into the city, and having *passed through Jericho*, a vast number of people had followed him from thence; and this new instance he had given of his miraculous power, increased his fame through all the neighbourhood, and drew the multitude as he passed along in crowds about him. Luke xix. 1.

2 And, behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

And as he thus proceeded on his journey, *behold*, another most remarkable occurrence happened, in which the efficacy of his grace was signally displayed; for [*there was*] *a man* in that country *whose name was Zaccheus, who was the chief among the publicans*, or head-collector of the customs in those parts; *and*, having heaped up abundance of wealth by his gainful employment, *he was* very *rich*. 2

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was, and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

And the great things which he had heard of Jesus made such a powerful impression on his mind, that when he was informed that he was coming by that way, *he* diligently *sought* an opportunity *to see* this celebrated *Jesus, what sort of a person he was; but he could not* compass his design *because of the crowd* about him; *for he* himself *was* very *little of stature*. 3

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-

And running therefore *before* the rest of the company, without regarding what they might think or say of him, *he got up into* 4

SECT. CXLIII. Luke XIX. 5

a sycamore-tree, that he might see him there distinctly; *for* he perceived *he was to pass that way*, and the tree stood so near the road that he must go close by it. *And Jesus, when he came to the place* where he was, *looked up, and saw him; and* knowing his disposition, character, and circumstances, he immediately *said to him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I* design thee a visit, and *must abide* for a while *at thine house;* and, fully satisfied that I shall be a welcome guest, I take the liberty to invite myself thither. 6 *And* Zaccheus was so overjoyed that Jesus should distinguish him in such a manner, that *he came down with* all the *speed* he could, *and gladly entertained him* at his house, thinking himself highly honoured by the presence of so excellent a Person.

7 *And the* Pharisees, and other self-conceited *persons who saw* [*it*], were very much offended at the particular regard that Jesus shewed him; and they *all murmured, saying, He is gone in to refresh himself at a man's* house[d] *who is* certainly *a* notorious *sinner*, since he follows the scandalous employment of a publican.

8 *But* as *Zaccheus* now was quite another man than he had been before, and Divine Grace had changed his heart, that he might fully obviate these reflections, and manifest the truth of his conversion, he *stood forth* in the face of all the company, *and said to the Lord* with great reverence and affection, *Behold, O Lord,* I acknowledge the sins of my past life, and desire to testify my repentance for them by an entire and immediate reformation; as the first-fruits of which, I openly declare, that *the half of my goods I give to the poor; and* out of the remainder, *if I wrongfully have taken any thing from any man* by injurious charges or oppressive claims[e],

tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false ac-

[d] *He is gone in to refresh himself*, &c.] The phrase καταλυσαι παρα τινι, properly signifies, *to halt at a person's house on a journey*, referring to the laying down their own burdens, or loosening them from their beasts at such times and places. See Wolf. Vol. I. p. 733.

[e] *If I wrongfully have taken any thing*, &c.] The word συνοφαντησα (as Heinsius has abundantly shewn) may properly signify any kind of *oppression*, especially under the *pretence of law*. (Compare Eccles. iv. 1, and v. 8. Septuag.) It seems therefore not so proper to limit it, as our translation does, to an injury done by a false accusation, which implies something of a formal trial, and defence of the party accused; whereas many frauds and oppressions might be practised by such a tax-gatherer where nothing of this sort occurred.

cusation, I restore *him* four-fold.

I am ready, not only to *restore* a fifth part more than the principal, (which is all that the law requires in such cases besides the trespass-offering, Lev. vi. 2—5, and Numb. v. 7, 8.) but even to return [*him*] *four-fold.*[f] SECT. CXLIII. Luke XIX. 8

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house; forsomuch as he also is the son of Abraham.

And Jesus said to Zaccheus, and to them that were about *him*, *Surely to-day is salvation come to this house;* and it is evidently to be seen that spiritual blessings are imparted to it, and designed for it, when such a penitent and religious temper is expressed: *since*, notwithstanding all the sins he has committed, it is now manifest that even *this man also is a* true *son of Abraham*, not only descended lineally from him,[g] but of a character in some measure worthy of so honourable a descent. 9

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

And therefore, notwithstanding all your murmurings, I rejoice in the consequences of this happy visit to him, as answering the great purposes of my life; *for the Son of man*, as I have formerly declared, (Mat. xviii. 11, sect. xciv.) *is come to seek and to save that which was lost;* and it is the grand design of his abode on earth to recover those who, like this poor Zaccheus in his unconverted state, were wandering in the way to everlasting ruin. 10

IMPROVEMENT.

THUS did our *Lord Jesus Christ*, wheresoever he came, scatter blessings around him, both to the souls and the bodies of men. Who can wonder that *Zaccheus* had a curiosity *to see*

[f] *I restore him four-fold.*] This was the utmost that the Jewish law required, even in cases of a fraudulent concealment and conviction, (unless where an ox had been killed or sold, and so its labour lost to the owner, and the discovery rendered more difficult; Exod. xxii. 1;) for the phrase of restoring seven-fold, Prov. vi. 31.) seems only proverbial, to express making abundant satisfaction. But if a man not legally convicted or accused, voluntarily discovered a fraud he had committed, besides his trespass-offering, he was to add to the principal only a fifth part. Lev. vi. 5. Zaccheus therefore shews the sincerity of his repentance by such an offer.—Some commentators, (with Salmasius, de Fœn. p. 242.) have remarked, that oppressive publicans were by the Roman law required to restore four-fold; but this was only after judgment obtained, where they had been guilty of extorting by force; whereas before conviction it was enough to make restitution of what had been taken; and even after it, in common cases, all that the law required was restoring *twice as much.* (Leg. locatio Vectigal. § quod. illic. and L. hoc edicto effic. Digest. de Publicanis.)—Archbishop Tillotson justly observes, that had more than an eighth part of Zaccheus's possessions been unjustly gotten, he could not have been able to make such restitution, after having given away half of what he now had to the poor, even though he had stripped himself of all. Tillotson's Works, Vol. III. p. 86.

[g] Descended lineally from him.] The name of Zaccheus (which is the same with Zaccai, Ezra ii. 9.) shews he was a Jew. See Lightfoot, Hor. Hebr. in loc. and Salmasius, de Fœn. p. 386.

SECT. CXLIII. *such a person!* And how happily did that curiosity end! *Christ* graciously *observed him*, and, with an amiable frankness and openness of heart, invited himself to be *a guest* at his house:
Luke XIX. 2, 3, 5 choosing to accept the entertainment of a *publican*, and to distinguish with a particular regard one that was so desirous to see him. And let us diligently observe how happy *a change* this
9 visit produced in the master of the family. O *Zaccheus*, well wast thou repaid for thine hospitality when *salvation came to thine house*, and the *Saviour* himself bore witness to thee as *a son of Abraham!*

What cannot the grace of God effect? This *publican* was in the morning contriving only how he might increase his estate by
8 all possible methods of gain; and, before evening, he cries out, *Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.* Thus does the *Spirit* of *Christ* operate on the soul, producing in it the fruits of righteousness and charity to our fellow-creatures, as well as of love to God and faith in the Redeemer. And surely the *miracle* by which *the walls of Jericho* were many ages before thrown down by the *sound of rams horns*, was not greater in its kind than that which now triumphed over the heart of *Zaccheus*, and threw down all the obstacles which corrupt nature had formed against the entrance of *Christ* into it.

Now were his eyes opened, and he saw in a moment how much more valuable *the pearl of price* was than all the *riches* he could part with to procure it. And he judged rightly of religion when he saw the necessity not only of *faith*, but of *charity* too; and not only of *charity*, but of *restitution* also to those whom he had injured, without which the highest pretences to *charity* are but presenting to God *robbery for a burnt-offering*.

Mark X. 46 & *seq.* *Our Lord*'s progress is marked with another work of Divine power and beneficence in *opening the eyes of the blind.* With what *importunity* was the cure desired! And when the petitioner was for a while *discouraged*, with what eagerness was that *im-*
48 *portunity* repeated. *Thou Son of David have mercy on me!* Thus will the sinner cry to *Jesus* when he sees how much he needs him. But alas! men are not aware of their spiritual indigence and distress: they *say* they *are rich, and increased in goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that they are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.* (Rev. iii. 17.)

When once they come to be awakened to a just sense of their case, there is then room for hope, and great encouragement for their address. We may in such circumstances say to them, as was said to *Bartimeus*, *Be of good courage, rise, he calleth thee.*
49 With pleasure should we deliver such a message; with pleasure should we lead on the *lame* and the *blind*, the weak and the trembling, in their application to *Christ;* and in all the instances,
Luke xviii. 43 in which his victorious grace is exercised, should join with those who have received it in *glorifying God*, and in celebrating

the *praise* of this Deliverer, whom he has mercifully raised up for his people.

SECT. CXLIV.

Christ delivers the parable of the ten pounds committed by a prince to his servants, and represents the vengeance taken by him on his rebellious subjects. Luke XIX. 11—28.

LUKE XIX. 11.

AND as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

LUKE XIX. 11.

SECT. CXLIV. Luke XIX. 1

NOW Jesus, on occasion of Zaccheus's conversion, having expressly said that he was come to be a Saviour, the people, *as they heard these things*, were ready to conclude that at his coming to Jerusalem he would openly declare himself to be the promised Messiah; but *he continued* [*his discourse,*] *and spake a* very useful and instructive *parable, because he was* now drawing *near to Jerusalem,*[a] *and* he perceived *they thought that the whole kingdom of God would immediately be revealed* among them, and that he, as the Messiah, would assume the government, and not only free Israel from the Roman yoke, but spread his triumphs over all the heathen nations. In order *therefore* to rectify their notions on this head, and to warn them of the danger they would incur by rejecting him when they saw those secular views disappointed, *he* offered to their consideration this similitude; and *said*,

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

12

A certain person of a noble birth went to a distant country in order *to receive*, from a superior prince there, an investiture to *a kingdom*, which was then fallen *to himself*, *and* of which the place where he dwelt made a part,[b] intend-

[a] *Because he was near to Jerusalem.*] The following parable considered in this view, as suited to the circumstances of time, and to the case of those to whom it was delivered, will appear a most wise and seasonable admonition; and by neglecting the instruction it was designed to give them, the Jews deservedly brought ruin on themselves.

[b] *Went to a distant country to receive a kingdom*, &c.] The parable seems to suppose this noble person to be the son of a prince, who, on some domestic or public revolution, was to enter upon the possession of his dominions, and to be confirmed in the government of them by the approbation of some more potent state: as the kings of Judea, and other neighbouring states, frequently were by the Romans: (see Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 14 (al. 26,) § 4, 5, & lib. xvii. cap. 9, al. 11.) He is therefore described as setting out with the view of being owned at his return, as their undoubted sovereign. (See Le Clerc's Harmony, p. 397.) This representation of the matter is so natural, that one would wonder what room there could be for the controversy between Maldonatus and Athanasius de Paris about it. It is quite needless to

SECT. CXLIV. Luke XIX. 13

ing afterwards *to return*, and fix his residence in his own country. *And* before he set out on his journey, *having called ten of his servants, he delivered to them ten pounds,*[c] lodging one pound in the hands of each, *and said unto them, Trade* with this money *till I come* back to take an account of your improvement. (Compare Mat. xxv. 14, & seq. § clxv.)

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds; and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 *But*, in the mean time, some of *his citizens*, among whom he had before lived in a more private character and station, *hated him, and sent an embassy after him*,[d] to prevent his establishment in his kingdom; expressly *saying, We* are at all adventures determined that we *will not have this man to reign over us*, and will endure all extremities rather than submit to his authority. And during his absence, which continued for some time, they thought themselves very secure in their insults.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.

15 But, notwithstanding all the confidence of these rebellious citizens, they were unable to prevent his exaltation to the throne, or to deprive him of the right he had of reigning over them. *And it came to pass, that when he had received the kingdom, and was come back* with the full powers that were granted to him, *he commanded these* his *servants, to whom he had delivered the money, to be called to him, that he might know what improvement each* of them *had made.*

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 *And the first* servant, who had gained the most, *came near, and said, Sir*, the improvement I have made of *thy pound* is such that it

17 *has gained ten pounds* more. *And* when his lord had heard how diligent and careful he had been, *he said to him, Well done*, [*thou*] *good ser-*

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because

pretend that this is an historical narration, that Archelaus is the nobleman referred to, &c.

[c] *He delivered to them ten pounds.*] The *μνᾶς*, or *mina*, as it is commonly called, contained sixty shekels (Ezek. xlv. 12,) and therefore, according to the common calculation of the worth of a shekel, placing it at half a crown of our money, it was seven pounds ten shillings; but according to Dr. Prideaux, who sets the shekel at three shillings, the mina was nine pounds sterling.—Our Lord probably chose to mention this small sum to illustrate the munificence of the master in bestowing on the faithful servant so great and noble a reward. Compare ver. 17.

[d] *Sent an embassy after him.*] This is expressed in such a manner as may intimate their sending ambassadors to the superior court, to enter their protest against his being admitted to the regal power, and to declare their resolution to oppose his accession. And so it well represents the solemn manner in which the Jews renounced Christ, acting as in the name of the Lord, and with a pretended zeal for his authority and glory.

thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

vant, since thou hast thus *been faithful in a very little,* I will amply reward it; for I will not only give thee for thine own, this treasure of which thou hast been giving me so good an account, but as my dominion is now enlarged, and many towns and tracts of land are subject to me, I will advance thee to a most honourable station under me, and *be thou governor over ten cities.* SECT. CXLIV. Luke XIX. 17

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

And the second came, and delivered in his account, *saying, Sir, thy pound* which was committed to me *has* been improved in such a manner that it has *gained five pounds. And* the improvement he had made was pleasing to his lord, and *he said likewise unto this,* Thou hast approved thyself a good and faithful servant, and I am pleased with thy diligence, and will reward it proportionably: *be thou also* governor *over five cities.*[e] 18 19

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold, *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin.

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou laidst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

And after him *another* servant, who had been negligent and slothful, *came, and said, Sir, behold* [*here is*] *thy pound which* was put into my hands; it is not at all diminished, but *I have* carefully *kept* it *laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because* I knew *thou art an austere man,* [*who*] *takest up what thou didst not lay down, and reapest,* or expectest to reap, *what thou didst not sow:* and therefore apprehending I might incur thy severity if any accident should befall this money in trade, I was determined not to venture it out of mine hands, and now return it just as I received it. 20 21

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant: thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

But when his lord heard him offer such a vile and groundless charge against himself as an excuse for his own negligence, *he* was filled with indignation, and *says to him, Out of thine own mouth will I condemn thee, O* [*thou*] *wicked servant:* thou hast taken upon thee to affirm, *thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up,* as thou expressest it, *what I did not lay down, and reaping what I did not sow;*[f] and thou mightest there- 22

[e] *Be thou also* governor *over five cities.*] It is observable, that in Mat. xxv. 20—23, sect. clxv. where the servants are represented as doubling the different sums intrusted to each, the reward is spoken of as the same; but here, the sums intrusted being the same, and the improvement described as different, there is a proportionable difference in the reward; which, as it is a beautiful circumstance, was, no doubt, intended for our instruction.

[f] *Thou knewest that I am an austere man,* &c.] This is not an acknowledgement of the vile and detestable charge of God's demanding of men, (as Dr. Guyse well expresses it) more difficult services than he has furnished them for, or would as

SECT. CXLIV. Luke XIX. 23.

fore on thine own principles conclude, that I should expect to gather where I had deposited such a sum of money, and to reap where I had thus sown: *And* if it had been so, and I had really been as severe as thou wouldest basely insinuate, *why didst thou not* [*then*,] for thine own security, *give my money into the bank, that when I came* to call for it at my return, *I might* at least, *have received it with* the common *interest*, if not with the extraordinary improvement which might have attended a successful trade?

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 *And* farther to testify his displeasure, *he said to* some of *them that stood by, Take away the pound* that was intrusted with him, *from* that idle, suspicious, unfaithful creature, who might otherwise have had that, and much more, allotted *him* for his own property, *and give it* 25 *to him that has ten pounds.* But they were much surprised at his assigning it to one who had before received so ample a reward; *and they said to him, Sir, he hath* already no less than *ten pounds*,[g] which, with the honour and preferment thou hast farther added, is surely an 26 abundant recompence. Nevertheless, the prince stood by his former award, and bestowed the other pound likewise upon him; declaring that his faithfulness and diligence was fit to be distinguished with the most favourable and repeated notice: and in this way it is, continued he, that I resolve to act; *for I assure you*,[h] *That to every one that hath*, or that improves what he hath, [*it*] *shall be given*, and he shall have yet more abundantly; *but for him that hath not*, or that acts as if he had nothing intrusted to his care, *even that which he hath*, and neglects to improve, *shall be taken away from him.* (Compare Mat. xiii. 12; xxv. 29; Mark iv. 25; and Luke viii. 18.)

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath, shall be given: and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

sist them in; which is, as that pious writer truly observes, a most unrighteous thought of God: but his lord only argues with him on his own base principles, and shews, that even on them he would be justly condemned for his negligence.

[g] *They said to him, Sir, he hath ten pounds.*] So far as this seems to express any thing of envy in the fellow-servants, it is not to be regarded as a significant circumstance; but only as an incidental one, to intimate to us, that his lord gave to the diligent servant what he had gained for himself.

[h] *I assure you.*] This seems to be the import of that phrase, which so often occurs, I say unto you; as if he should have said, You may take it on my authority.

27 But those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

SECT. CXLI. Luke XIX.

And having thus enquired into the conduct of his servants, and treated them according to the different use they made of what had been intrusted with them, he then proceeded to pass sentence on his rebellious citizens who had refused to have him for their king: and, with a just resentment of their base ingratitude, he said, *But* as for those *mine enemies, who* were determined to oppose my government, and *would not have me to reign over them, bring* them *hither* immediately, *and slay* [*them*] with the sword *in my presence*,[1] that others may learn a more dutiful submission by the execution of these rebels.

Now all this was as if our Lord had said, Thus shall I at length appear, not as a temporal sovereign, but as the Great Eternal Judge and victorious Ruler over all, when, having received power and dominion from my Father, I shall bring all to their final account; and with infinite ease triumph over those who reject and affront my authority: take heed therefore that you be not found in their wretched number, as many will be who pretend most eagerly to desire the Messiah's appearance.

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

And when he had spoken these things, he continued his journey, and, leading the way, *went on before* his disciples, *ascending to Jerusalem*, being determined to appear there at the approaching passover, though he well knew that he was to encounter persecution and death there. (Compare Mark x. 32, sect. cxlii.) 28

IMPROVEMENT

LET us also hear and fear. *Our Lord* is gone, and *has received his kingdom.* He has *delivered* to us our stock, to be *improved* in his service: let us be animated to *diligence* in it; for proportionable to that *diligence* will be our *reward.* Let us remember we labour for ourselves, while we labour for him; as all the progress we make in wisdom and in goodness, renders our own Ver. 13 17, 19

[1] *Slay them* with the sword *in my presence.*] This is the exact import of the word κατασφαξατε. It does indeed properly express the dreadful slaughter of the impenitent Jews, by the sword of each other, and of the Romans; but that does not seem the chief design of the passage, which plainly relates to the far more terrible execution which shall be done on all impenitent sinners in the great day, when the faithful servants of Christ shall be rewarded.

SECT. CXLIV.

souls so much the happier, and will render them so to all eternity. Blessed *servants* that have the applause of such a *Master*, and share a *reward* as liberal as that conferred on a faithful steward, who should be made *governor of* a province containing *ten cities!*

Ver. 19, 21

Let us beware of a *slothful neglect* of our stock: let us beware of those *hard thoughts of God* which would discourage us from pursuing his service. Above all, let us take heed, that we do not proudly and insolently *reject the government* of his *anointed* 24 *Son*, and either say with our tongues, or declare by our actions, *We will not have this man to reign over us:* for if we do, we *speak a word against our own lives.* He will be glorified by us, or upon us. And oh, what shall we do, if in that dreadful day he should *bring us forth* as the helpless prisoners of his justice, and command us *to be slain in his presence!* How can we withstand his power! or to the horns of what altar shall we flee for sanctuary? *O Lord, our flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and we are afraid of thy judgments;* (Psal. cxix. 120.) May we never be the miserable objects of them; but having faithfully served thee here, may *that* be to us a day of honour, reward, and triumph, which shall be to every presumptuous rebel a day of shame and terror, of dreadful execution and eternal destruction!

SECT. CXLV.

Christ is entertained at Bethany, and his feet anointed by Mary. The Jewish rulers contrived to kill Lazarus. Mat. XXVI. 6—13; Mark XIV. 3—9; John XII. 1—11.

JOHN XII. 1.

SECT. CXLV.

John XII. 1

THEN Jesus came, six days before the passover, to Bethany, which was a village (as was said before, John xi. 18, sect. cxl.) that lay in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, *where* the abode of *Lazarus was, who had been dead,* and buried, [*and*] *whom he* lately by an amazing miracle had *raised from the dead.*

JOHN XII. 1.

THEN Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

Mat. XXVI. 6

Now at this time, *when Jesus was in Bethany,*[a]

MAT. XXVI. 6.

Now when Jesus was

[a] *When Jesus was in Bethany.*] Few passages in the Harmony have perplexed me more than this. I was long of opinion with Origen and Theophylact, defended by Le Clerc and Dr. Whitby, and especially by Dr. Lightfoot, (Harmon. N. Test. § 71, 80.) and Mr. Whiston (in his View of Harmony, p. 128, 129.) that the story recorded by Matthew, (chap. xxvi. 6—13,) and Mark (chap. xiv. 3—9.) was different from that in John: but, on maturer consideration, it appears to me more probable,—that Matthew and Mark should have introduced this story a little out of its place,—that Lazarus, if he made this entertainment, (which is not expressly said by John,) should have made use of Simon's house, as more convenient for it,—and that Mary should have poured this ointment on Christ's

in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, [MARK XIV. 3.—]

JOHN XII. 2. There they made him a supper, and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

where, by his frequently resorting thither, he was well known, and had many friends that very much rejoiced to see him; as he was *in the house of Simon the leper.*[b] In testimony of their high respect and great affection for him, *they made a* handsome *supper for him there*, and treated him in the evening; which was the usual time for entertainments with the Jews, especially on the evening of their sabbath-days, which was the season when this feast was made:[c] *and Martha*, who had formerly distinguished her care on a like occasion, (Luke x. 40, sect. cviii.) having seen that all things should be rightly ordered, *waited* on Christ at supper; *but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.*

SECT. CXLV. John XII. 1–3.

3 Then took Mary [an alabaster-box, *containing*] a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly; [MARK, and she brake the box, and poured

3 *Then Mary*, the other sister of Lazarus, being deeply affected with the many instances that Christ had given her of his love, and especially with his late mercy to her family, in recovering so dear a brother from the grave, was solicitous to give some uncommon token of her gratitude and respect to so excellent a guest; she therefore *took an* elegant *alabaster pot*, or vase, [*containing*] about *a pound* weight *of unadulterated ointment of spikenard*,[d] [*which was*] *exceeding valuable; and, having broke* the top of *the ves-*

head and body, as well as on his feet;—than that within the compass of four days Christ should have been twice anointed with so costly a perfume; and that the same fault should be found with the action, and the same value set on the ointment, and the same words used in defence of the woman; and all this in the presence of many of the same persons: all which improbable particulars must be admitted, if the stories be considered as different.—But, after all, I can assert nothing confidently; for there is no impossibility in the thing taken either way.

[b] *In the house of Simon the leper.*] It is not to be thought that he was now a *leper*; for in this case he would not have been suffered to live in a town, nor would the Jews have come to an entertainment at his house: but either he was once a leper, and had been cured by Jesus, or else the name was given to the family, as some considerable person in it had been formerly a leper.

[c] When this feast was made.] Though Matthew and Mark relate the story, where they are speaking of what happened but two days before the passover, it is more probable, (as we have just now shewn) that it is placed by John in its due order; and as the following days appear to be sufficiently distinguished, and Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, which John has fixed to the next day, (John xii. 12, sect. cxlvi.) must have been on the first day of the week, this entertainment, therefore, was on the evening of the day before, when the Jewish sabbath was over.

[d] *Unadulterated ointment of spikenard.*] I cannot take upon me absolutely to determine whether the word πιστικης signifies that the *ointment* was quite *genuine* and *pure* (as Casaubon and L. Cappellus assert), or whether (as Grotius and Erasmus think) it be put for σπικαλης, and refers to the particular part of the fragrant shrub *nardus*, of which the *ointment* was made. (See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xii. cap. 12.)—If the latter be the meaning of it, what is said of its great value must justify our calling it unadulterated.

SECT. CXLV. John XII. 3.

sel, or shook the perfumed balsam which was in it, that it might be the better liquified, and flow forth the easier,[e] *she* came behind him, and *poured* out the greater part of *it on his head, as he sat at meat, and anointed the feet of Jesus* with the remainder; *and*, when she had done this, she, like the humble penitent mentioned above, (Luke vii. 38, Vol. I. p. 329.) *wiped his feet with the* long flowing *tresses of her hair; and the* whole *house was filled with the* fragrant and delicious *odour of the ointment.*

it on his head,] [as he sat at *meat*,] and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.—[MAT. XXVI. 7.—MARK XIV.—3.]

Mat. XVI. 8

But when his disciples observed it, there were some that were moved with inward displeasure at what appeared to them so great an extravagance; *and said* with a low voice to each other, *Why was this waste of the ointment made*, and such a quantity of this rich balsam poured out to so little purpose? *And they* secretly *murmured against her*,[f] and could hardly refrain from rebuking her for it. *One of his disciples therefore*, [*even*] *Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon*, that wretched person *who was about to betray him*, as if he knew not how to bear such waste, expressed a peculiar emotion, and *said* aloud,

MAT. XXVI. 8. But when his disciples saw *it*, [there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why *was this waste of the ointment made? And they murmured against her.*] [MARK XIV. 4—5.]

John XII. 4.

JOHN XII. 4. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him,

5 *Why was not this* fine *ointment sold for a great deal* of money: for it must have been worth [*even*] *more than three hundred pence*;[g] *and* thus it might have served for the relief of many, if the price of it had been *given to the poor?* This would surely have been approved of by our Master, as a much wiser and better way of disposing of it, than thus to lavish it

5 Why was not this ointment sold [for much, *even*] for [MARK, more than] three hundred pence, and given to the poor? [MAT. XXVI. 9. MARK XIV. 5.—]

[e] *Having broke* the top *of the vessel*, or shook the perfumed balsam, &c.] Sir Norton Knatchbull and Dr. Hammond maintain that συντριψασα does not signify that she *broke* the vessel, which they think an improbable circumstance; but only that she shook it so as to break the coagulated parts of the rich balsam, and bring it to such a liquidity that it might be fit to pour out. Yet I must own that the original does not so naturally express this.

[f] *And they murmured against her.*] Whether this relates to more than Judas, cannot certainly be said; since it is well known that the plural number is sometimes put for the singular. See Gen. viii. 4; xix. 29; Judg. xii. 7; and Mat. xxvii. 44.—Some have thought Judas Iscariot was the son of that Simon in whose house the feast was made; but the name was so common, that it cannot be concluded with any certainty.

[g] *More than three hundred pence.*] It is to be remembered that these were Roman pence, and consequently amounted to nine pounds, seven shillings, and sixpence; the expression only intimates a general guess at the value by a round sum (for such three hundred denarii were, though the correspondent value with us is not so); as if we should say, on a like occasion, it must have been worth above ten pounds.

SECT. CXLV. John.

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

away on the luxurious entertainment of a few minutes. *Now this he said, not because he* at all *regarded the poor, but because he was*, notwithstanding all his pretended piety and zeal, a subtile *thief; and* as he *kept the bag* which contained their little stock, *and carried what was put into it*,[h] he thought if so large a sum had come in just before he went off with it, (which he was now preparing to do,) he should thus have had a fine opportunity of enriching himself.

MAT XXVI. 10. When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? [let her alone; for she hath wrought a good work upon me.] [MARK XIV. 6. JOHN XII. 7.—]

But Jesus knowing the design of Judas, and perceiving that others were secretly joining with him in this severe and uncharitable censure, without taking any notice of that vile principle from which he knew [*it*] proceeded in him, directed his discourse to his disciples, and *said to them, Why do you* give such *trouble* and uneasiness to *the* good *woman*, of whose piety and friendship we have had so long an experience? *Let her alone* in what she is about; *for* what *she has* now *performed* is *a good work*, and she deserves to be commended for the great respect she has been shewing *towards me*. *For* as to what has been suggested now in favour of *the poor, you have* them *always with you; and* providence will continually so order it, that some compassionable objects shall be still among you, that *whenever you please you may* have an opportunity to *do them good; but me you have not always* with you; for I am soon to leave you, and to be placed beyond the reach of your kindness. And indeed my departure out of the world is so near, that with respect to this action of our friend Mary, which you are ready to condemn, I may say, that, *she has reserved this* ointment *for the day of my burial*:[i] And, not

11 For ye have the poor always with you, [and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good:] but me ye *have not always.* [MARK XIV. 7. JOHN XII. 8.]

JOHN XII.—7. Against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

John XII. 7.

[h] *Carried what was put into it.*] The learned Elsner (I suppose to avoid the seeming tautology) would render ἐβάσταζεν, *he took away*, or *carried off*, that is, for his own use, what was put into the purse or bag. He refers to John xx. 15, and Mat iii. 11, viii. 17, as instances of such a use of it; to which he adds others from Polybius, Athenæus, and other good authors. (Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 333.) But the meaning here may be, that he had not only the keeping of the bag at that time, but that it was his stated office to take care of it and manage its stock; and therefore I choose not to follow Eisner's version, since βαστάζω never signifies *to carry off* a part privately, which would have been expressed by συνφέρω, as it is Acts v. 2.

[i] *She has reserved this for the day of my burial.*] Mr. Whiston (in his View of the Harmony, p. 129) thinks this is as if our Lord had said, "She has spent but a little of this ointment now; but has reserved the main part of it to pour upon my head some days hence, which shall

SECT. CXLV.

knowing whether she may have an opportunity of assisting in those last offices, *she has* now *done what she could; for in that she has poured* out *this ointment on my body, she has* in a manner *come before* the time thus *to anoint* and to embalm *my body for the burial;* so that you may almost look upon it as a work of piety and love to a dead friend, where a generous heart will 9not be sparing. And, on the whole, though you have such hard thoughts of what she has been doing, it shall not finally turn to her reproach or damage; but as I graciously accept it, so *I assuredly say unto you,* That *wheresoever this gospel* of mine *is preached,* and it in time shall have its triumph *over the whole world, this* very action *also which this* pious and affectionate *woman has* now *performed, shall* be inserted in the history of my life, and *be spoken of* with honour *for a memorial of her* friendship and affection to me; so that her name shall be embalmed in such a manner, as to be far more fragrant than the perfume which she has poured forth on my head and my feet. (Compare Eccles. vii. 1.)

Mark. XIV. 8

8 She hath done what she could: [for in that she hath poured this ointment on my body,] she is come aforc-hand to anoint my body to the burying. [Mat. XXVI. 12.]

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that [this woman] hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. [Mat. XXVI. 13.]

John XII. 9

Now these things passed at a public entertainment: *a great multitude of the Jews therefore,* who had been dubious whether Jesus would come up to the passover or not, (compare John xi. 56, § cxli.) quickly got intelligence of it, and *knew that he was there* in Bethany; *and they came* thither in crowds from Jerusalem, and that indeed *not only on account of Jesus,* who had been retired for some time, *but also* out of curiosity, *that they might see Lazarus, whom he had* lately *raised from the dead,* who now appeared publicly with him.[k]

John XII. 9

Much people of the Jews therefore know that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 *But the chief priests,* and other members of

10 But the chief

"be so near my death, that it may be "considered as a kind of embalming." But besides the general reasons against believing the action repeated, which have been mentioned in note *, it is unnatural to suppose that, in the transport of her love and gratitude, she would use this little management of keeping back most that was in the vessel; or that if she had, John would have mentioned the quantity she took, which was no way to his purpose, or have taken notice of the room's being filled with the odour of it: not to say, that the prediction which Mr. Whiston supposes our Lord to utter, is quite trifling, and would seem to bespeak its own accomplishment, in a manner which he never would have stooped to.

[k] Who now appeared publicly with him.] Perhaps, after so extraordinary a series of providences as Lazarus had passed through, he might choose to spend some time in retirement and extraordinary devotion; and it is natural to suppose he

priests consulted, that they might put Lazarus also to death;

the sanhedrim, were filled on this occasion with such rage and envy, that, as they had already resolved on the death of Jesus, they *consulted also how they might* find some method to *kill* X. *Lazarus*, either by public prosecution or private assassination: *For* they well knew that

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

I *many of the Jews* deserted them, and *went away* to Bethany *on his account*, *and* were so powerfully struck with the convincing evidence of so astonishing a miracle, that they *believed on Jesus*; and while such a monument of his power and goodness continued, they were afraid lest more should revolt to him.

IMPROVEMENT.

We see how happily Mary improved by *sitting at the feet of Jesus*, and what evidence she gave of her having *chosen the better part.* (Compare Luke x. 39, 42.) Like her, let us with humble thankfulness bestow *our very best* on him, who has given us *that* and every thing else. She gladly *poured out* her choices *ointment* on him, whose *name* is to every true believer far more fragrant than *ointment poured forth.* (Cant. i. 3.) How does her generous love shame those who grudge every expence in the cause of *Christ!*

When we are relieving the pious *poor*, we are, as it were, *anointing the feet of Jesus*: we are indeed performing a service far more acceptable than any thing of this kind could in itself be. Let us remember, that *we have the poor always with us*; Ver. and that they are permitted to continue among us, *that we may do them good whenever we please.* Far be it from us to imagine, that what we so spend is *waste.* Let all who would not share 4—6 in the guilt and punishment of *Judas*, abhor the vile hypocrisy of making a pretended concern for the *poor*, a cloak for an opportunity of enriching themselves with *their spoils*; than which nothing can be more infamous, or can have a directer tendency to mingle the consuming curse of a righteous and almighty God with all that a man possesses.

The *Pharisees* conspired to *kill Lazarus.* What a mixture 10 was this of cruelty and folly! What was *his crime?* or what could *their hope* be? From what *death* could not *Christ* have delivered him? or from what *tomb* could he not again have recalled him? Yet something like this is the madness of all who hate and persecute others, for being the trophies of the Redeemer's victory and grace.

would endeavour to avoid the importunity of crowds, who out of curiosity would be pressing in upon him, perhaps with some impertinent inquiries.

SECT. CXLV. Ver. 10.

But let not his servants fear; *their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name.* (Jer. l. 34.) His *work is perfect;* and the day and hour is approaching, in which his triumph over all his enemies shall be so complete, that his friends shall be for ever secure, not only from being destroyed, but from being alarmed by them.

SECT. CXLVI.

Christ rides in triumph to Jerusalem on an ass's colt. Mat. XXI. 1—9; Mark XI. 1—10; Luke XIX. 29—40; John XII. 12—19.

MAT. XXI. 1.

SECT. CXLVI. Mat. XXI. 1.

AND after Jesus had been anointed by Mary in the manner related in the preceding section, *it came to pass on the next day,* which was the first day of the week, that he proceeded on his journey with his disciples; and *when they drew nigh to Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage and Bethany,* or to the outward boundaries of these two places,* *at the* foot of the *mount of Olives,* which lay to the east of the city, *then Jesus,* as the time appointed for his sufferings was just at hand, being resolved that he would make a public entry into Jerusalem, *sent* out *two of his disciples,* 2 *Saying to them, Go your way into the village* which lies yonder *over-against you; and immediately, as soon as you enter into it, you shall* there *find a she-ass* standing *tied* at a door, *and a* young *foal tied* also *with her, on which no man ever yet sat;* lay hold of the foal, and *untie him* directly, without any scruple or concern about the owner's leave, *and bring* 3 *[him] hither to me: And if any man* should

MAT. XXI. 1.

AND [LUKE, it came to pass,] [JOHN, on the next day,] when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage [and Bethany,] unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two [of his] disciples, [MARK XI. 1. LUKE XIX. 29. JOHN XII. 12.—]

2 Saying unto them, Go [your way] into the village over-against you; and straightway [as soon as ye be entered into it,] ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt [tied] with her, [whereon never man [LUKE, yet] sat:] loose [him,] and bring [LUKE, *and bring* them] unto me. [MARK XI. 2. LUKE XIX. 30.]

* *Were come to Bethphage and Bethany.*] As Bethany was the town from which our Lord set out, some have supposed there were two places of this name; of which the one was fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, (as it is said, John xi. 18.) and the other, that he now was come to, joined to the mount of Olives, and was but a sabbath-day's journey, or but eight furlongs distant from the city. (Compare Luke xxiv. 50, and Acts i. 12.) But it is hardly probable there were two places of the same name within a mile of each other; and it is much more natural to suppose, that the limits of Bethany might extend to the mount of Olives, and be contiguous to the boundaries of Bethphage, which was part of the suburbs of Jerusalem, and reached from the mount of Olives to the walls of the city. See Lightfoot, Harmon. N. T. p. 79, and Whitby on Mark xi. 1.

3 And if any man say unto you,[Luke, Why do you loose *him*?] ye shall say [Luke, thus unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him:] and straightway he will send[him hither.] [Mark XI. 3. Luke XIX. 31.]

take notice of what you are doing, and *say to you, Why do you* offer to *untie* the foal, and lead [*him*] away? *you* in reply *shall say thus to him, Because* Jesus *the Lord has need of him: and*, in regard to the authority of my name and character, *he will immediately send him hither* with the dam, that I may use either of them as I shall choose, to ride into the city: so that you may bring them both hither, without any apprehension of accusation or scandal.

SECT. CXLV. Matt. XXI.

Mark XI. 4. And [the disciples][Luke, that were sent] went their way, and found [Luke, even as he had said unto them] the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met: and they loose him. [as Jesus commanded them.] [Mat. XXI. 6. Luke XIX. 32.]

And the two *disciples that were sent* on this errand presumed not to debate the reasonableness of the orders he had given them: but presently *went their way, and found, just as he had said unto them,*[b] *the colt* with its dam *tied abroad at the door* of a house, which stood *in a* very open *place* at the entrance of the village, *where two roads met: and, as Jesus commanded them, they* immediately began to *untie* the colt, that they might lead *him* away.

Mark XI.

Luke XIX. 33. And as they were loosing the colt, [certain of them that stood there,] the owners thereof said unto them, [What do ye?] Why loose ye the colt? Mark XI. 5.]

But as they were thus *untying the colt*, providence so ordered it, effectually to prevent any clamour or reflection,[c] that the owners of it were near at hand, with several other persons. And *some of them that stood* by *there*, and particularly *the owners of it, said unto them, What are you doing* there? *Why do you* offer to *untie the colt*, which you know is none of your own? *And they said to them, even as Jesus had ordered*, We mean no injury to you, or to the colt; but Jesus the Messenger of the blessed God, *the* great *Lord* and Proprietor of all, *has need of him*, and would borrow him for a little while, to ride into the city; and his character is too well known to give you any reason to fear you shall lose any thing by your readiness to accommodate him in this little instance. *And* on this

Luke XIX. 33

Mark XI. 6. And they said unto them, even as Jesus had commanded; [The Lord hath need of him:] and they let

Mark XI. 6.

[b] *Just as he had said unto them.*] The exact knowledge which our Lord shewed of so many minute and most fortuitous particulars, must surely impress the minds of these messengers greatly, and establish the faith of his followers. It is observable, that many such things occurred a little before his death, which, considered in this view, have a peculiar beauty. Compare Mat. xxvi. 31—35; Mark xiv. 15, 16; and Luke xxii. 10—13.

[c] *Effectually to prevent any clamour or reflection.*] Perhaps had not the owners of the beasts happened to be by, and had not Luke expressly mentioned them, the malice of ancient or modern infidels would have found some occasion for raising an outcry on the ambiguity of the words, *The Lord has need of him.* Its being a weak and contemptible cavil would not have prevented their using it, as we learn by abundant experience.

SECT. CLVI.

they were thoroughly satisfied, and *let them go* away with it.[d]

them go. [LUKE XIX 34.]

Mark Ch. 7

And thus *they brought the colt to Jesus, and the ass* its dam went with it: *and*, as they had neither of them any saddle, they *threw their* loose *mantles upon* the backs of *them* both, that Jesus might take his choice which he would ride, and might sit the more easily and decently on either: *and* as he chose the colt, though (as was just now said,) it had never been broke or backed before, *they set Jesus thereon.*[e]

7 And they brought the colt [and the ass] to Jesus, and cast their garments [on them;] [LUKE, and they set Jesus thereon.] [MAT. XXI. 7. LUKE XIX. 35.]

8 *And many*, [*even*] *a very great multitude*, who now surrounded him, *as he sat on the young ass*,[f] [*and*] *went on* to the city, in token of their respect to him, *spread their mantles in the way*, that he might ride as upon one continued carpet; *and others cut down* little *branches from the trees*, that stood by the side of the road, and gathered flowers which grew near it, *and strewed them in the way*; according to the usual custom of expressing the public joy on the arrival of any illustrious prince. (Compare 1 Mac. xiii. 51, and 2 Mac. x. 7.)

8 And many [even a very great multitude,] [LUKE, as he [JOHN, sat on the young ass, *and*] went on,] spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches [from] off the trees, and strewed them in the way. [MAT. XXI. 8. LUKE XIX. 36. JOHN XII. 14—]

Mat. XXI. 4.

Now all this was done, and permitted by Jesus, *that* what was prophesied of old concerning the Messiah might be fulfilled in him: and that by this occurrence *it might be* literally *accomplished which was spoken by the prophet* Zechariah,[g]

MAT. XXI. 4. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

[d] *They let them go.*] If these people were not (as they possibly might be) the acquaintance of Christ, they might easily meet with him at Jerusalem, if they had a mind to inquire after the ass and colt; or they might be left according to their direction at some house in the city, or be sent back by some of our Lord's attendants; though the evangelists do not descend to such minute particulars.—There is no appearance of Christ's intending to shew his sovereignty in transferring the property of these creatures; and though, no doubt, he had a power to do it, his usual prudence would probably direct him to wave it at a time when so many eyes were upon him for evil.

[e] *They set Jesus thereon.*] As all the evangelists but Matthew speak expressly of his riding on the colt, what Matthew says of bringing them both to Jesus, and putting on them their clothes, and setting him thereon, (though it be spoken in the plural number,) implies no more than setting him upon the mantles thrown on that which he made choice of, and is no intimation of his riding upon both.

[f] *As he sat on the young ass.*] John says, that *Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon:* but as the larger accounts given by the other evangelists in a great measure supersede this, I could only bring in a part of that clause here; though in the whole of this work I am as careful as possible to omit no one circumstance that any of the sacred writers mention.

[g] *It might be* literally *accomplished which was spoken*, &c.] I shall not enter on a particular detail of the reasons which induce me to believe that the prophecy of Zechariah is here quoted according to its primary and literal sense; but content myself with referring the reader to Bishop Chandler's Defence of Christianity, p. 102—107, and Mr. Bullock's Vindication, p. 175, 176.

SECT. CXL. Mat. XXI.

[as it is written,] [JOHN XII.—14.]

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, [Fear not;] behold, thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

saying (as it is written, Zech. ix. 9.) "*Say ye* "*to the daughter of Zion*, rejoice greatly, and "shout, O daughter, or inhabitant, of Jerusa- "lem; and *fear not* any of thine enemies: for "*behold*, with pleasing amazement, *thy King*, "the great expected Messiah, *cometh unto thee*, "*meek*, and having salvation; *and*, in token "of the gentleness of his administration, and "his strict observance of the Divine law,[h] he "shall make his public entrance into thy city, "not as other princes affect to appear, in a "proud triumphal chariot, or riding on a state- "ly managed horse, decked with a variety of "splendid ornaments, and attended with a "pompous cavalcade; but he shall appear like "one of thine ancient patriarchs or judges, in "the earliest and best ages of thy commonwealth, "*sitting upon an ass; yea* he shall come upon "*a colt, the foal of an ass*, which though it had "never been backed before, shall in his mira- "culous hands be tractable and gentle."

JOHN XII. 16. These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glo-

Now it is to be observed, that *his* apostles and other *disciples did not understand these things at first*, nor recollect the correspondence between the preceding prophecy and the event: *but when Jesus was* raised from the dead, and *glorified* at the right-hand of the Father, from whence he

John XII. 16

[h] His strict observance of the Divine law.] The learned and ingenious Bishop Sherlock has set this fact in a most just and beautiful light, in his Fourth Dissertation annexed to the last edition of his Discourse on Prophecy. God, that he might keep the people of Israel in a more sensible dependence on himself, forbade the use of that strong, generous, and majestic animal the horse, (Job xxxix. 19—25.) in their armies, as also of chariots, Deut. xvii. 16. (Compare Josh. xi. 6; Judges v. 15.) David therefore, who rode himself on a mule, and ordered Solomon to do so on his coronation-day, (1 Kings i. 33, 34.) burnt the chariots he took from the enemies, and hamstrung their horses, to make them unfit for war. (2 Sam. viii. 4.) And afterwards, when Solomon (1 Kings iv. 26.) and succeeding princes multiplied horses, they were rebuked by the prophets, and chastised by God for it. (See Isa. ii. 6, 7; xxxi. 1; and Hos. xiv. 3.) And the removal of them is spoken of as matter of promise in the days of the Messiah, Hos. i. 7; Mic. v. 10, 11; and Zech. ix. 10—It is therefore with great propriety, that Christ in his most public triumph chose, according to the prophecy before us, to *ride on an ass*.—Nor are we to imagine there was any thing mean and ridiculous in it; for the eastern asses are a much larger and more beautiful animal than ours; and it plainly appears, the patriarchs and judges of the Jewish nation thought it no disgrace to ride upon them; of which Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 3.) Moses, (Exod. iv. 20.) and Jair's family, (Judges x. 4.) are instances. Nay, magistrates are spoken of by the general description of those that *rode on white asses*. Judges v. 10. (Compare Numb. xxii. 21; 2 Sam. xvi. 2; xvii. 23; xix. 26.) So that all the ridicule which has fallen on this passage must, to speak with all possible charity, be retorted on the ignorance of those who have taken upon them to censure what they did not understand.

CHAP. XXVI. sent down his Spirit to instruct them in the mysteries of his word and kingdom, *then they remembered that these things were written concerning him* as the Messiah; *and* [*that*] *they had done these things unto him*, without any designed reference to the prophecy, which at the time of its accomplishment they did not so much as think of.

John II. 16

Luke xix. 37

And when he was come nigh to the city, [*and now*,] *now at* the lower part of *the descent of the mount of Olives*, which lay, as was said before, to the east of Jerusalem, and was but a few furlongs from it, *A great multitude of people who were come* from Galilee and other parts *to* celebrate *the feast* of the passover, *having heard*, by some who had run before the rest of the company, *that Jesus was coming* in this solemn pomp *to Jerusalem*, immediately resolved to go

John xii. 12

13 and usher him in with all possible respect: And accordingly they *took branches of palm-trees*, which were commonly carried before those who rode in public triumph, *and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna!* May God save and prosper him![i] *Blessed* [*be*] *the King of Israel, who comes in the name*, and by the authority, *of the Lord* our God, to redeem us, and to rule over us. (Compare Psal. cxviii. 25, 26.)

17 *Now* as he rode along in all this pomp, *the people who were with him*[k] *when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and* by that almighty voice, *raised him from the dead*, among whom he had lain part of four days, *testified* [*it*] to the strangers who were come up out of the country, and told them what a glorious miracle

18 they had been eye-witnesses to. [*And*] *for this cause*, among others, and indeed with a peculiar regard to this, *the people also met him* from the city in the manner which has been described above; *because they heard that he had done this*

Luke XIX. 37 —And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives,

John XII. 12 Much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna, Blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

[i] *Hosannah!* May God save and prosper him! I suppose few readers need to be informed that the Hebrew word *Hosannah*, signifies *Save, we beseech thee.*

[k] *Now the people who were with him.*] It is impossible that their not understanding the prophecy of Zechariah now, or recollecting it afterwards (which are the things mentioned in the preceding verse, John xii. 16.) should be the reason of what follows here. It appears thus from hence, (and it is very material to observe it), that *now* [*therefore*] is sometimes used in a looser sense, so as to answer to [*and*] or [*now*] in our language

astonishing *miracle*, which in some circumstances, exceeded any which he had wrought before. SECT. CXLV.

LUKE XIX.—37. [And] the whole multitude of the disciples [that went before, and that followed,] began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen: [MAT. XXI. 9. —MARK XI. 9.—]

And the whole multitude of the disciples that had attended him from Bethany, both they *that went before* him, *and* they *that followed* after, in his triumphant procession, *began* greatly *to rejoice, and to praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works* and glorious miracles *which they had seen* performed by him on a great variety of occasions, and which they now particularly called to mind. [*And*] as they now Luke XIX. 37.

38. [*And* cried,] saying, [Hosanna to the Son of David;] blessed [is he, *even*] the king that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. [MAT. XXI. —9.—MARK XI.— 9.]

38 were met by a vast concourse of people from Jerusalem, *they* joined together in their triumphs and congratulations; and *cried* with all their might, *saying*, "*Hosannah to the* great illustrious *Son of David*, who now vouchsafes to "make his public appearance among us; *blessed* "*be he*, [*even*] *the* long-expected *King* and "Sovereign of God's people, *who* now *comes* "to us *in the name of the Lord!* May the most "exalted honours be paid him! May continued "prosperity attend him! Let there be *peace in* "*heaven*, and a rich variety of divine favours "be dispensed from thence; *and*, in return for "them, let *glory* be given to God *in the* most "exalted strains, and let all the *highest* orders "of angels join in his praises! *Blessed* and "prosperous *be the* sacred *kingdom of our father* "*David!* May it speedily be established, and "may it long flourish; even that kingdom, "which is not gained by the alarms of war and "garments rolled in blood, but *which comes* "*in the name of the Lord*, and renders itself, "by that powerful influence on men's spirits "which we now feel, victorious over whatsoever would oppose it! *Hosannah*, therefore, "*in the highest* strains! Repeat again, and again, "your songs and your congratulations." Thus they expressed their joyful and rapturous expectations of his assuming the royal dignity, and vindicating Israel from the Roman oppression; and, emboldened by the display of his power in the resurrection of Lazarus, they feared not the resentment of their present master, for declaring themselves thus openly in his favour.

MARK XI. 10. Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. [MAT. XXI.—9.] Mark XI. 10.

LUKE XIX. 39. And some of the

And some of the proud and envious *Pharisees*, who were *among the multitude* as spies rather Luke XIX. 39.

SECT. XLVI.

than friends, were much offended at the high honours that were paid to Jesus, and maliciously *said to him*, with an intent to embarrass and expose him, *Master*, canst thou be pleased with all this noise? or can it be consistent with thy great humility to suffer it? Why dost thou not *rebuke thy disciples* for such dangerous acclamations as these? Dost thou intend to give encouragement to such seditious speeches, and to stand by the consequences which may follow them?

Luke ix. 39.

Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 *And* Jesus, who was now determined to lay aside that reserve which for wise reasons *he* had formerly used, *answered and said unto them, I tell you, that* the reason for these acclamations is so plain, and the evidences of it so strong, that it must be great stupidity not to see, and great obstinacy not to own it: so that *if these should be silent*, one might almost expect that *the* very *stones should immediately cry out*, to proclaim my kingdom: yea, God would even animate the stones on such an occasion, rather than he would suffer me to want this triumph, so evidently marked out by his prophets.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

John XII. 19 *The Pharisees then*, turning from him with envy and rage, *said to each other, Perceive ye* not *that you gain no* manner *of advantage by* all your consultations, *and the decrees of your* sanhedrim? *Behold, the whole world is gone after him*, till he has now thrown off the mask, and taken upon him to declare his pretences; which, if the people thus fall in with them, must necessarily end in our ruin, and perhaps in that of the whole nation.

JOHN XII. 19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after him.

IMPROVEMENT.

John xii. 14. LET us behold this *meek triumph* of the great *Redeemer* with pleasure! He entered the capital of his kingdom *riding upon an ass*; a circumstance in which he made, though by no means a ridiculous, yet to be sure a very humble figure; yea, he appeared exactly as the *prophet* described him, upon *a colt, the foal of an ass*: not yet grown up to its best form, nor adorned with any sumptuous or elegant furniture, but only covered with the *mantles* of his poor attendants, and perhaps with nothing better for a bridle than *a cord*, which might have *tied* the foal *at the door*.

Mat. xii. 3, 4 Mark xi. 4, 7

John xii. 13 Let us imagine that we saw the *Son of God*, and the *King of Israel*, thus proceeding towards *Jerusalem*, and the *people meeting*

him, and surrounding him with their acclamations: *Hosannah! Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord!* Do not our hearts spring at the sound? Do we not, as it were in spirit, go forth with them, and join in their sublime, though simple, song? Thus let us welcome him into our hearts! Let us echo it back! *Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, with divine authority, and divine blessings in his hands! And *blessed be the kingdom* he hath erected! May perpetual prosperity attend it! May *the north give up* a swarm of subjects to it: and may not *the south keep back* her swarthy sons! May *nations be born at once*, and thousands together made *willing in the day of his power!* Surely if these are not our affectionate wishes, the warm and zealous sentiments of our very hearts, it may almost be expected, that the very *stones should cry out*, to accuse and condemn our ungrateful stupidity. Luke XIX. 40.

Unhappy *Pharisees*, who looked on these *triumphs* with envy and rage, and grieved that *the world was gone after him!* Yet less unhappy, had they not renewed their attempts against him, those fatal attempts which ended in their ruin! But who, that had seen the *procession*, and heard the *shouts* of the transported *multitude*, could have imagined or believed, that before the end of the week they should have turned their voices against him, and instead of *Hosannah*, should have cried out, *Crucify him?* Yet so it was, and *Christ* knew it would be so. Such is the uncertainty of popular applause! Who would then purchase it at the expence of his conscience, or even of his ease? John XII. 19.

These transports were raised by the hopes of a *temporal kingdom*; and when those hopes were disappointed, these transports were turned into rage. Oh that there may be none, under all the engagements of a *Christian*, and even of a *ministerial* profession, who proclaim *Christ* with great appearance of zeal, only that they may exalt themselves; and wish prosperity to *his kingdom*, only as it may promote their own interest in a *world*, from which it was the great design of his death to *redeem* his servants. Mark XI. 10.

SECT. CXLVII.

Christ having wept over Jerusalem, enters into it, and vindicates the temple a second time from the profanation of the traders.
Mat. XXI. 10—16; Mark XI. 11: Luke XIX. 41, *to the end.*

Luke XIX. 41.
AND when he was come near, he

Luke XIX. 41.

THUS our Lord went on in his triumphant progress towards Jerusalem; *and when he was come near* it, and had now the view of it before him, (the place where he was command-

ing an extensive prospect of it), *beholding the city* in all its present beauty and glory, and considering the calamities which would shortly be its ruin, *he* tenderly *wept over it*, *Saying, Oh that thou hadst known*,[a] *even thou* unhappy city, which art now on the very point of being devoted to final destruction! Oh that at length, though with the greatest obstinacy thou hast despised the messages of all thy prophets, thou hadst but known and seriously regarded, *at least in this thy* latest *day* and opportunity of grace, *the* important *things which belong to thy peace*, and on which thy final happiness depends! *But now*, alas *they are hid from thine eyes*, and God will leave thee in his righteous judgment to this affected ignorance and obstinate perverseness, till it end in thine utter ruin. *For* the time hastens on, and in a little while *the days shall come upon thee, when* thou shalt suffer all the hardships of the closest siege, and *thine enemies shall draw a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and press thee in on every side*,[b] so that with all thy numerous inhabitants thou neither shalt be able to resist nor to escape them: *And they shall level thee with the ground* on which thou

beheld the city, and wept over it.

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the

[a] *O that thou hadst known.*] It is certain (as we have observed elsewhere, note [a], on Luke xii. 50, p. 122) that the particle ει is sometimes used to express *an ardent wish*, (compare Numb. xxii. 29, and Josh. vii. 7, *Septuag.*) and the connection here will very well bear it.—If our translation be retained, it must be acknowledged that the broken manner of speaking is very emphatical: our Lord will then seem to pause in a silent reflection on the happy consequences that would have attended their obedient regard to his invitations and addresses.—But to add the words [*it had been well*], which some have proposed, would rather enervate than help the sense; as I think it would do in most of the passages which learned critics have produced from the Greek writers as instances of a like figure of speech. See Mr. Hallet on Script. Vol. I. p. 11.

[b] *Thine enemies shall—compass thee round*, &c.] Josephus says expressly, that though it was thought a great and almost impracticable work to encompass the city with a wall, yet Titus animating his soldiers to attempt it, they in three days surrounded it with a wall of thirty-nine furlongs in circumference, with thirteen castles in its circuit; and by this means all hope was cut off that any of the Jews within the city should escape. (Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 12 [al. 13], § 1, 2.)—He also tells us, that when Titus had taken the city, and, contrary to his will, the temple was consumed with fire, he caused the foundations both of the temple and the city to be dug up and levelled with the ground leaving only three towers and part of the wall to be a specimen of its former strength and grandeur: (Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 1 [al. 18], § 1.) And afterwards the whole was so entirely destroyed, that *not one stone* was *left upon another*; as Socrates relates, Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 20.—In short, the accomplishment of every part of this prediction is recorded by Josephus in so affecting and particular a manner, especially in the Sixth Book of his Jewish War, that I cannot but recommend the perusal of it to every Christian who has an opportunity of reading it.

ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

standest, *and* crush *thy children within* der thy ruins; *and shall not leave* so m *stone upon another in thee* of all thy sp sacred structures: and all these terr ties shall overwhelm thee, *because th know* and consider *the* appointed *seas* merciful *visitation*, nor attend to thos tures of grace which I have so often ma person to thee, and have still urged wi much seriousness and tenderness.

MAT. XXI. 10. [And Jesus entered into Jerusalem:] and when he was come, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? [MARK XI. 11.]

And Jesus entered into Jerusalem with gr solemnity, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people; *and as he made his entrance* in such a public and remarkable way, *the whole city was in a* great *commotion* at so uncommon an appear- ance, *saying*, *Who is this* that comes in all this pomp, and is attended with these high congra-

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the Prophet, of Nazareth of Galilee.

tulations? *And the multitude* that came with 11 him *said*, *This is Jesus the* great *Prophet*, who is *of Nazareth in Galilee*, even he that is so cele- brated all over the country for the fame of his doctrine and miracles.

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and [when he had looked round about upon all things,] [LUKE, began to] cast out all them that

And Jesus having come into the city by the 12 eastern gate, alighted from the colt, and *went* directly *into the temple of God*, whither the peo- ple followed him: *and when he had looked round about*, and made his observations *upon all things* there,[c] as he perceived those profanations were again renewed which he had formerly so so- lemnly chastised soon after he entered on his public ministry, *he began* with a holy indigna- tion to animadvert upon them, as he had done three years before,[d] and *to drive out all them*

[c] *When he had looked round about upon all things.*] It is plain from this expression of St. Mark, that Jesus, when he went into the temple on the day of his public entry, took particular notice of all things there; which it is hardly probable that he would do without reforming the abuses with which the Jews so shamefully profaned it; and Matthew so expressly joins his driving out the traders with the transac- tions of this day, that howsoever it ap- pears from several instances that the evangelists are not always exact in ob- serving the order of time, it is highly reasonable to suppose, that Jesus purged the temple on this day. Yet it appears so evident from Mark's account, (ver. 12 —17.) that the traders were driven out on the next day, when Christ returned from Bethany to the temple, after he had cursed the fig-tree, that I cannot but sup- pose with Mr. Whiston, (in his view of the Harmony, p. 130, 131,) that this oc- currence happened *twice*: and therefore I have only given here what Matthew and Luke relate of this matter, reserving Mark's account to the next day: (see § cl. note [a], on Mark xi. 15.) Though, after all, I dare not be confident in a case where the greatest critics are so much divided in their sentiments.

[d] *As he had done three years before.*] I see no reason to wonder at the repetition of such an action as this, or to imagine that John would have placed this story so early in his history as he does, if it had

and drives out them that bought and sold there.

and bought in the outer-court of *the* which was appointed for the Gentile to worship in, but was made use of as if it were a common market- with an irresistible authority he *over- tables of the exchangers of* foreign into the current coin, which those that from distant parts, might want to offer the service of the sanctuary, (See Exod. xxx. 13.) *and* likewise overturned *the seats of them that sold doves* for sacrifices. *And he said to them* as he turned them out, Such practices as these profane the house of God, and shamefully pervert the use for which it was designed; for *it is written*, (Isa. lvi. 7.) "*My house shall be called an house of prayer* for all people, to "which they shall resort for the performance "of acts of religious worship:" *but you have* turned it into an house of merchandise, and *made it*, (as the Prophet speaks, Jer. vii. 11.) *a den of rob- bers*,[e] a place where traffick is carried on by persons of the most infamous character, who live by deceit and oppression, and practise the vilest extortions, even in the house of the righ- teous and blessed God. (Compare John ii. 14—16, § xxi. and Mark xi. 15, 17, § cl.)

sold, and [LUKE, them that] bought in the temple, and over- threw the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves: [MARK XI.—11.—LUKE XIX. 45.]

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house [is, *and*] shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. [LUKE XIX. 46.]

14 *And* there were many of *the blind and lame*,[f] who had no sooner heard of his arrival in the city but they immediately desired to be led to the place where he was; and they *came to him in the temple, and he* graciously *healed them* in the presence of all the people.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

15 *But when the chief priests and scribes beheld*

15 And when the chief priests and

not happened then as well as now. (See John ii. 14—16, Vol. I. p. 142.)—— Some have observed a greater severity in our Lord's treatment of those that sold doves now than before, as he now over- threw their seats, whereas he formerly contented himself with ordering the own- ers to take them away (John ii. 16;) but I will not answer for the solidity of the remark.

[e] *A den of robbers.*] Bishop Small- brooke well observes, (in his Answer to Woolston, Vol. I. p. 168.) that our Lord in this expression seems to allude to the custom which robbers in those parts had of sheltering themselves in dens and caves in the wilderness, where great mul- titudes of them often joined in sharing their plunder.

[f] *The blind and lame.*] Many such would, no doubt, be waiting in the several ave- nues of the temple, to ask alms at a time when there would be such a vast concourse of people: and there seems a peculiar propriety in our Lord's multi- plying these astonishing miracles, both to vindicate the extraordinary act of au- thority he had just been performing, and to make this his last visit to Jerusalem as convincing as possible, that those who would not submit to him might be left so much the more inexcusable.

scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

the wonders he performed, and ob
the very *children were crying out in*
and continued the song which th
had begun, *saying*, "*Hosannah t*
"*David!* with joyful acclamations
"tulate his coming, and bid him we
"to the city of his royal father!" inst
being open to conviction, *they were filled*
indignation and resentment, *And they*
to him, Dost thou hear what these children
and judge it proper to encourage thes
thinking creatures in such language as this?
And Jesus says unto them, Yes, I am sensible
enough of what they say, nor is it needful or
fit that I should reprove them for it. Are you
unacquainted with the scriptures; you that
would have the people to regard you as the
great teachers of the law? or *have you never*
read what David says, (Psal. viii. 2) "*Out of*
"*the mouth of babes and sucklings* thou hast or-
"dained that strength whereby *thou hast per-*
"*fected* thine own *praise*, by the weakness of
"the instruments made use of in thy service."[g]
You cannot but have read it, and I assure you,
that as God in many instances has used, and in
a little while will eminently use some of the
weakest and meanest of mankind to accomplish
his great and glorious purposes; so this event
is a most signal illustration of those words; and
it is by a secret influence of God on the minds
of these little ones, that they are led, as it were,
to upbraid your silence and insensibility, by
so remarkable and suitable an exclamation.

LUKE XIX. 47. And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes, and the

And thus *he was* till the time of the passover, which was celebrated within five days after this,[h] *teaching daily in the temple: but the chief priests, and the scribes, and* others of *the rulers*

Luke XIX. 47.

[g] *Out of the mouth of babes*, &c.] To *ordain strength*, which is the phrase the Psalmist uses in the passage here referred to, was in effect (as the seventy render it) to *perfect praise*; so that there is no need to be solicitous about that little variation in the quotation.—This general observation of David was greatly illustrated by the Hosannahs of these children; and yet much more by the triumph of the apostles, weak as in many respects they were, over all the opposition of Jews and Gentiles.

[h] Celebrated within five days after this.] This was the first day of the week, or our Lord's day; in commemoration of which Palm-sunday was long ago denominated, and as ceremonies increased, was particularly observed. The passover was celebrated by Christ on the Thursday-night following, and he was crucified on Friday. Some transactions of each intervening day are marked in the following history.

priests would destroy him, but are afraid of the people.

[illegible], who had before decreed his death, [illegible] the resolution which the sanhe- [illegible] me to by the advice of Caiaphas, [illegible], sect. cxii.) were still contriving [illegible] ight execute their horrid design, and [illegible] *sought* an opportunity *to destroy him:* [illegible] y knew not how to effect it, *and could* [illegible] mediately *find* out *what they might do* [illegible] that purpose, or what safe method they [illegible] take to seize him; *for all the* common [illegible] *listened to him with* so *great attention* [illegible] pleasure, that they hung as it were on his lips while he spake,[f] and pressed upon each other for an opportunity of hearing him. The magistrates therefore feared lest the populace should tumultuously rise in his defence, if they offered any public violence to him, and that thus they might endanger themselves while they sought to destroy Jesus.

chief of the people, sought to destroy him;

48 And could not find what they might do; for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

IMPROVEMENT.

NEXT to the sight of a *bleeding* and *dying Redeemer*, there can surely be none in the whole world more affecting than this which is here represented; even *the Son of God weeping over perishing sinners;* yea, over the sinners of *Jerusalem.* We might, perhaps, have been ready to think that, foreseeing so circumstantially, as we know he did, all the ungrateful and inhuman treatment he was to meet with in this nest of murderers, with the scene of his sufferings, and the very *house of Caiaphas* in his full view,[k] he should rather have *taken up a proverb* against it, and have anticipated the triumphs of that awful day when God would plead his cause with irresistible terror, and avenge the quarrel of his sacred blood. But behold, he seems to forget *himself*, and all his wrongs, great and cruel as they were; and in the midst of a *procession* intended for his honour, he *melts into tears*, as if it were for the calamity of a friend, or a brother; and says in the most genuine language of undissem-
42 bled grief, *Oh that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace!*

Behold, O our souls, with wonder and with awe, at once *the*

[f] They hung as it were on his lips while he spake.] This is the literal import of ἐξεκρεμαῖο αὐτὸ ἀκούων. To render it (as in a late version.) *The populace were strongly attached to his doctrine*, is far from expressing the full sense.

[k] *House of Caiaphas* in his full view.] If we may credit the best accounts of Jerusalem which remain, this was exactly the case.—I cannot forbear referring my reader to Mr. Howe's excellent treatise, entitled, The Redeemer's Tears wept over lost Souls; in which, as in most of his practical works, there are such sublime and pathetic strokes of true, manly, and Christian eloquence, as do a great honour to the language and age in which they were written.

goodness and *severity of God*: (Rom. xi. 22.) The s[illegible] *Jerusalem wept over*, and yet *abandoned to ruin!* We [illegible] part in af[illegible] the tid ngs of the gospel are *the things* [illegible] *long to our* [illegible] the things on which our everla[illegible] depends. [illegible] remember, that the time will [illegible] if we do not [illegible] to them, they will be *hid fr*[illegible] There is a limited *day* of mercy and grace; and therefo[illegible] *while it is called to-day*, let us *hear his voice, and not ha*[illegible] *hearts*, (Heb. iii. 15.) lest slighted *mercy* at length retire[illegible] *vengeance* take its [illegible] *vengeance* which will fall the he[illegible] and pierce the deep[illegible] proportion to all the *long suff*[illegible] and *goodness* which have been exercised towards us in vain [illegible] all, and especially the *ministers of Christ*, learn compassion to souls by such an example; and when the strongest efforts of love prove ineffectual for their recovery, let us at least be *mourning* for them *before the Lord*, and *weeping over* the ruin which we cannot prevent.

Though *Christ* had *cleared the temple* from the profanations of these *traders* at the beginning of his ministry, he found the same pollutions returned at the close of it. And, alas, how often do we find it thus with respect to our hearts! How soon do those weeds spring up again which we had been endeavouring with a resolute hand to root up; and how often are efforts for reformation forgotten, even when the attempt appeared at first to be most necessary! Let us learn of *Christ* not to be *weary of well-doing*, but with continued zeal renew our endeavours again and again.

The *scribes* and *Pharisees* envied *Christ*; but the *children* 15
surround him with their *Hosannahs*: and he graciously accepts their feeble accents of praise, as *ordained* by God out of the *mouth of babes and sucklings*. Nor will he now *despise the day* 16
of small things. Oh that we might have the pleasure to see *little children* pronouncing the name of Christ with reverence and love! And surely we who are *parents* must add, with a peculiar accent, Oh that *our own* may join in the choir! May they learn the *song* from our lips; and may our whole lives be one continued visible proof of the devotion and affection with which we present it! *Amen*.

SECT. CXLVIII.

Some Greeks that came to celebrate the passover at Jerusalem are introduced to Christ, who enters on an excellent discourse particularly suited to their circumstances; and retires in the evening to Bethany. John XII. 20—36; Mat. XXI. 17; Mark XI.—11.

JOHN XII. 20.

AND there were certain Greeks a-

JOHN XII. 20.

AND among those that came up to Jerusalem from different countries *to worship at the*

Some Greeks desire to see Jesus.

[illegible]e were some Greeks, or persons who [illegible]cended from Grecian parents, and used [illegible]ge, but had forsaken the idolatry of [illegible] and devoted themselves to th[illegible] *These therefore came to Ph[illegible] of Bethsaida*, a city *of Galilee*,[b] *and* [illegible]s a favour of *him* to introduce them to [illegible]ter, *saying*, in a very respectful manner, [illegible]ee earnestly *desire to see* and hear this *Je-* [illegible]f Nazareth, of whom we have [illegible]old [illegible] extraordinary things, and who [illegible]ow [illegible] received into the city with such unusual regard.

mong them that came up to worship at the feast:

[illegible]he same came [illegible]fore to Philip, [illegible]hich was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Upon this, *Philip comes and tells* what their request was to *Andrew*, who likewise was of Bethsaida, and had been first acquainted with Christ; (John i. 40, 44, sect. xvi. xxii.) *and then Andrew and Philip*, having agreed upon it, went and *told Jesus*, that some Greeks who were come to the feast desired admittance to him.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again, Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23 *And Jesus* immediately ordered them to be brought to him; and as they were approaching him, he *answered them, saying*,[c] At length *the hour is come*, and the appointed time is just at

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come

[a] *Some Greeks*,—who had devoted themselves to the God of Israel.] It is strange, that such learned critics as Isaac Vossius and Salmasius should imagine these worshippers to have been idolatrous Gentiles. Dr. Whitby, and several other considerable writers, have indeed thought that they were such as are commonly called *proselytes of the gate*, that is (as most readers well know,) persons who, having renounced idolatry, and being worshippers of the God of Israel, might, according to the law of Moses, be permitted to dwell in Judea, and to converse among the Jews, though not with entire freedom. And it has likewise been thought, that the regard which Jesus shewed to such, in vindicating the court of the Gentiles, (where they assembled for religious worship,) from the contemptuous profanations of the Jews, (Mat. xxi. 12, 13, p. 290.) might dispose these pious persons to address themselves to him.—But their attending at the passover leads me rather to imagine, (with Arndius, Miscel. Sac. p. 6.) that they were what the rabbies now call *proselytes of righteousness*, that is such as by circumcision obliged themselves to observe the whole law: (compare Acts ii. 5; viii. 27; xiii. 43.) Yet I will not venture confidently to affirm it.

[b] *Bethsaida of Galilee.*] This town lay on the borders of Syrophœnicia, from whence (as Grotius thinks) these Greeks might come; so that they might, perhaps, be acquainted with Philip as a neighbour; or otherwise we cannot say why this circumstance relating to him is here mentioned.—The learned Reland argues, that there were two Bethsaidas, of which this lay most to the north. See Reland. Palestin. p. 653.

[c] *Jesus answered them, saying.*] The phrase here intimates the suitableness of the following discourse to this particular occasion, by attending to which, many of the beauties of it will be discovered. Our Lord might, perhaps, enlarge on some of these hints; and if his hearers took a due notice of them, and made a proper report on their return home, it might prepare the way for the apostles, when they came by their preaching more fully to unfold and illustrate these important doctrines.

that the Son of man should be glorified.

hand, *that the Son of man must be glo*
I would have you look on the approa
Greeks as an earnest of the flow
Gentiles to me. But wonder
is to precede it; for *verily, ve*
you, and assure you of it as a m
important truth. That *unless a gr*
fall to the ground, and die and waste awa
it remains single and *alone, but if it* seem
and wither after it is sown, such is the pri
of vegetation which it contains, that a new
duction of the like kind arises, and *it b*
forth much fruit. And so it is that I myself s
fall, and a new scene be opened, in which my
kingdom shall seem to be utterly lost and gone;
yet, like the spring corn, it shall assuredly
revive, and appear beautiful and fruitful.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

But, in the mean time, such difficulties are 25
also to be expected by my faithful servants, that
it is but fit I should inform these strangers of
what I have once and again told you; that *he*
who loves his own life too well to part with it
for my sake, *shall lose it*, and expose himself to
death in the worst and most dreadful sense of the
word; *but he that* acts as if he *hates his life in*
this world, by exposing it to the greatest dangers
in the cause of my gospel, *shall preserve it* even
to everlasting life, and secure a state of immortal
glory and happiness. (Compare Mat. x. 39,
sect. lxxvi; Mark viii. 35, sect. lxxxix; and
Luke xvii. 33, sect. cxxviii.) *If any man* there- 26
fore would engage to *serve me* as one of my
loyal people, *let him* resolve to *follow me* whi-
thersoever I shall lead him, whatever dangers
and difficulties may lie in the way: *and* let him
know, for his encouragement, that *where I am*,
or where I shortly am to take up mine abode,
there shall also my faithful *servant be*; for I will
assign him an inheritance in that blessed world
where I am for ever to rest and reign after all
the sufferings I have endured here: *and* I assure
you that, among all that follow me, *if any man*,[1]

25 He that loveth his life, shall lose it: and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man

[1] *If any man serve me.*] Our Lord, by this indefinite expression, strongly intimates, that his kingdom was to be of a very extensive nature; and that not only the proselytes of righteousness, but those of the gate, and indeed even the idolatrous Gentiles themselves, might, on their believing the gospel, be admitted into it.

er nation he be, or whatever his reli- serve me, him will
ossion may before have been, will faith- *my* Father honour.
here, *him will* [*my*] *Father* also
fer such rich rewards upon him,
for ever both great and happy.

d this, our Lord paused for a while,
on a deep contemplation of the very
d views of things which lay before him, 27 Now is my soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
hen he added aloud, *Now is my very soul*
ssed and *troubled* in an affecting view of
pproaching sufferings, *and what shall I*
What petition shall I offer to God on this
asion? Shall I say, *Father, save me from this*
dreadful *hour*, and from all the agonies which
I am to endure in the gloomy season before me?[e]
Nay, *but for this cause* was I born into the
world, and for this end *I came even to this* pre-
sent *hour*, that I might bear the sufferings on
which I am entering, and might redeem my
28 people by them. And far be it from me to 28 Father, glorify thy name.—
draw back from such engagements and under-
takings. I will therefore much rather say, *Fa-*
ther, glorify thine own name, and dispose of me,
and all my concerns, in such a way as may most
effectually answer that great end!

Then, at that very instant while he was speak- —Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.
ing, *there came a voice from heaven* [*which said*],
I have both already *glorified* [*it*] by the whole
of thy ministry thus far; *and I will glorify* [*it*]
yet *again* in a more signal manner by what far-
ther remains before thee.

29 *The multitude therefore who stood by and heard* 29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard *it*, said, That it thundered:
[*it*], though not all in a manner equally distinct,
were perfectly astonished at the awful sound;
and some among them *said, That it, thundered;*[f]

[e] *What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?*] I suppose few need be told, that the *pointing* of the New Testament is far less ancient than the text. It is agreeable to observe how many difficulties may be removed by varying it, and departing from the common punctuation: of which I take *this* to be one of the most remarkable instances. For as the text does not oblige us to it, it does not seem natural to suppose that our Lord actually offered this petition, and then immediately retracted it again.

[f] *Said that it thundered.*] Thunder often attended a voice from heaven: (see Exod. xix. 16, 19; Rev. iv. 5; vi. 1; x. 3.) In allusion to which, perhaps the voice itself was called by the ancient Jews, *Bath Kol*, or *the daughter of the voice*, being ushered in with *thunder*, and as it were produced from it.—Elsner has shewn that the heathens reckoned that sudden thunder was a sign that a prayer then offered met with the most favourable regard. (See Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 334, 335.)—Dr. Lightfoot observes here, (Hor. Hebr. in loc.) that Christ had *thrice* the testimony of *a voice from heaven*; first, when

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John XII. 30

others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

while *others*, who were nearer, *said*, That *an angel spake to him* from heaven.

But *Jesus answered and said* to his disciples, who stood near, and distinctly heard it, *This voice* from heaven *came not* chiefly *for my sake*, who was before assured of the affection of my Father, and knew the purpose he had formed to glorify himself by me; *but* it was uttered *for yours*, that you may not be offended at the treatment I shall meet with, and quit your hope in me, and regard for me, on account of any of the sufferings which are coming upon me. This indeed is a very critical and important time: for *now is the judgment of this world*,[g] which I am going to conquer and condemn, that by my death my followers may both be taught and enabled to triumph over it, and those may be convinced of sin that believe not in me: (compare Gal. i. 4, and John xvi. 8, 9.) Yea, *now shall* Satan, *the ruler* and god *of this world*, *be cast out* from that empire which he has so long usurped over the minds of men, and especially over the heathen nations. (Compare Eph. ii. 2, and 2 Cor. iv. 4.) *And when I am lifted up from the earth*,[h] though I may seem thereby to be made the trophy of mine enemies, yet such shall be the effect of that important event, that *I shall* thereby *draw all men to me*; that is, I shall lay a foundation for conquering the most stubborn hearts by so rich a display of my love; and shall by a secret, but powerful influence on their minds, persuade multitudes of all ranks and

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

he entered on his public ministry, as the High Priest of our profession, at his baptism; (Mat. iii. 17.) and then a second time, when a command was given to hear him, as the great Prophet of the church, at his transfiguration; (Mat. xvii. 5.) and now again, when he had made his public entry into Jerusalem, as a King.

[g] *Now is the judgment of this world.*] Mr. Massey renders this, (in his Vernac. Sacra. p. 8, 9.) *Now is this world come to its crisis*: and Grotius and More (in his Theological works, p. 207.) explain it of the *redemption of the world*, or its vindication from the bondage of Satan. But this is so unusual a sense of the word, that I choose, with Dr. Whitby, to understand it of the *condemnation of the world*, or of the *judgment* passed upon its wicked principles and practices, and of the victory which Christians were to gain over it in consequence of the death of Christ. See John iii. 18, 19. xvi. 8, 11.

[h] *When I am lifted up from the earth.*] I think Dr. Whitby's note on this text sufficiently vindicates this version of ὑψωθω. See the Greek Version of Deut. vii. 1; Judges vi. 3; xxi. 21; 2 Sam. vii. 12; 1 Kings xiii. 31; Job vii. 4. Prov. iii. 24; iv. 12; Jer. iii. 16. and compare John xiv. 3; 1 John iii. 2; and 3 John ver. 10, where ὅταν ἔλθω may signify, *when I come*.

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all nations to list themselves under the banner I raise. (Compare John iii 14, 15. Vol. I. p. 154.)

John XII. 33 *Now this he spake* of his being lifted up from the earth, as *signifying by what death he should die*, even by crucifixion, in which the person suffering was lifted up on high, and hung as it 34 were between heaven and earth. And in general it was understood by the people as implying some violent death shortly to come upon him. *The multitude* therefore *answered him*, *We have heard* it taught as a certain truth *out of the law*, or out of the volume of our sacred writings, *that the Messiah* is immortal, and *abides for ever*, "that his kingdom is an everlasting "kingdom, and his dominion continues unto "all generations;" (2 Sam. vii. 16; Psalm lxxxix. 29; cx. 4; Isa. ix. 7; Ezek. xxxvii. 25; Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14.) *and how* then *dost thou*, who now plainly professest thyself to be the Messiah, *say that the Son of man must be lifted up* from the earth, and die a violent death? *Who is this Son of man?*[1] Is he, as such language as this might seem to intimate, a different person from the Messiah, whom we have been taught to expect under the title of the Son of man? This was said by some of the multitude who were ill-affected towards him, and desired to find something to object against him.

35 *Then Jesus said to them*, Do not cavil at what I now say; but remember how short this opportunity is, which, through the divine goodness, you now enjoy: *yet a little while is the light with you*, which you may derive from me, or my servants who shall come to you in my name; *walk* therefore *while you have the light*; comply with the gracious purposes of God in mak-

33 (This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law, that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lift up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light, lest

[1] *Who is this Son of man?*] A writer of great note interprets this, as if they had said, "Who is this that so absurdly, "and inconsistently with the prophets, "speaks of himself as the *Son of man*, "while he talks of being *lifted up*, and dying?" (See Dr. Sykes on Christianity, p. 110.) But the sense given in the paraphrase appears to me more natural, and I am pleased to find it in Grotius. This was a real and important difficulty; but it was fit some obscurity should for the present be left upon it, lest the plainness of the prediction should have prevented its accomplishment. Our Lord therefore gave the discourse a useful turn, and a few days more proclaimed the mystery which he had before revealed to his apostles in private, when he set out on his last journey to Jerusalem. (See Mat. xx. 18, 19. sect. cxlii.)

darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

ing these discoveries to you, and regulate your temper and conduct by them; *that darkness may not overtake you*, that you may not be deprived of the gospel, and left in a night of ignorance and misery: *for* you know it is a most uncomfortable thing for a traveller to be benighted in his way, as *he that walks in darkness* wanders from place to place, and *knows not whither he goes*, or into what dangers he may fall the very next step he takes; and much more dreadful will it be for you to be deserted of God, and left to the darkness and folly of your own hearts. (Compare John xi. 9, 10, sect. cxxxix.) Let me therefore once more seriously and kindly exhort you, that *while you have the light* thus clearly shining around you, to *believe in the light*, and honestly follow it, *that you may be the children of light*, who, being now truly wise and good, shall be the heirs of holiness, glory, and joy everlasting.

SECT. CXLVIII. John XII. 35.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.—

— These things spake Jesus [and he left them,] and departed, [MARK, and now the even tide was come, he went] [out of the city unto Bethany] [MARK, with the twelve;] [and he lodged there,] and did hide himself from them. [MAT. XXI. 17. MARK XI.—11.]

These things Jesus spake, when the Greeks applied themselves to him; *and* as the unbelieving Jews were greatly irritated by the actions and discourses of the day, and would not be awakened to conviction, he *left them, and departed* thence to a retired place: *and when now it was late in the evening*, he privately *went out of the city to Bethany, with* none to attend him but *the twelve* apostles; *and*, knowing that his enemies were watching to destroy him, and might have attempted to seize him by night if he had tarried at Jerusalem, *he lodged there* at Bethany, *and concealed himself from them*, to avoid the assaults of their deliberate malice till his hour was come.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHO can wonder at the desire these *Greeks* expressed to *see* so celebrated a Person as *Jesus* was! We hope there was something more than mere curiosity in it, and that at length they saw him with believing eyes, and, according to his prediction, *glorified him* by a cordial acceptance of his gospel.—His *disciples*, we see, were ready to introduce them: and surely every faithful *minister of Christ* will undertake the task with pleasure, when he sees souls awakened by divine grace, and inquiring after *Jesus* with affectionate concern. Ver. 20. 21 22 23

Blessed be God, it has already, in many instances, been seen, that by the *death of Christ* an *immortal seed* was sown, which 24

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has multiplied in all ages, and is still multiplying: Oh that it might have a greater *increase!* One would think that words so gracious as these should promote that *increase*, and operate upon every heart to produce *a love* to him sufficient to conquer every danger and opposition which may be met with in his cause:

Verse 25

26 behold the *promise* which he has left upon record; "*If any man*, "be he ever so mean and unworthy, will but faithfully *serve* "*and follow me*, whatever his former wanderings and rebellions "may have been, *where I am, there shall also my servant be.*" Happy state indeed! not only, like these Greeks, to have a transient sight of *Christ*, but to be *for ever with him!*

How admirable is the love and stedfastness of our *Redeemer*, who procured so great a happiness for us at so dear an expence!

27 and even when his innocent *soul was troubled* in the view of his *sufferings*, instead of declining them, met them with joy! How should it animate us to renew that general comprehensive *petition*, than which none can be more suitable to us with regard to all the divine dispensations; *Father, glorify thine own name!*

28 Glorify thyself, *O Lord!* and to that great end dispose of us as thou pleasest; for we should abhor ourselves if we had any interest separate from thine!

We may be assured, as certainly as by *a voice from heaven*, that this great end shall be answered; and in this we should re-

31,32 joice. Behold, *the prince of this world is cast out!* Behold, *Satan* is vanquished by *Christ!* and *Jesus is lifted up* on the cross for a standard to all the nations. Behold the attractive magnet by which *all men* are to be *drawn*, by which all his chosen people shall be brought to him, and so raised up to heaven itself! Let us *look unto him from the ends of the earth*, and labour with our cold hearts to awaken them to that lively and ardent affection which we owe to him who was *crucified for us.*

35,36 For ever adored be divine grace for this *gospel light* which discovers to us so excellent an object! May we use it to saving purposes, and so *walk in it*, as that we may appear to *be the children of light!* Let us think of that last distribution of mankind, when *the children* and heirs *of light* and *darkness* are once for all to be separated. Let us think of the gloom of eternal *night*, which will shortly overtake those by whom the gospel is now despised; and remember how much it will be aggravated by the *light* we have so long seen. Do thou, *O God*, at whose word *light* arose out of darkness, *send forth* by thine influences on our hearts *thy light and thy truth*, that they may *lead and bring us to thine holy hill;* (Psal. xliii. 3.) and that we may have the satisfaction of *knowing whither we go*, even when *we walk through the* dark *valley of the shadow of death.* (Psal. xxiii. 4.)

SECT. CXLIX.

John's reflection on the infidelity of the Jews. As Christ was returning the next morning to Jerusalem, he curses the barren fig-tree. John XII. 37—43; Mat. XXI. 18, 19; Mark XI. 12—14.

JOHN XII. 37.

SECT. CXLIX. John XII. 37

JOHN XIII. 37. BUT though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

NOW such was the perverseness of the Jews, and such the prejudice they had conceived against our Lord, that though he had sufficiently declared himself to be the true Messiah, and *though he had done so many* undeniable and glorious *miracles* at this and other times *before them*, in their most public places and most numerous assemblies, *yet* the greater part of them were hardened in their infidelity, and, notwithstanding all that he had said and done, they were in general so obstinate, *that they did not believe on him* as the Messiah. *So that the saying of Isaiah the prophet was* plainly *fulfilled* and verified in them,[a] *which he spake* in the name of Christ and of his servants, referring expressly to the gospel times, (Isa. liii. 1.) "*Lord who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been* so effectually *revealed* or made "bare,[b] as to conquer those strong prejudices "which men have entertained against thine "appointed method of salvation?"

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

38

39 Therefore they could not believe,

And, *for this reason, they were* now in a manner utterly *incapable of believing, because* many of them having long wilfully opposed the most suf-

39

[a] *So that the saying of Isaiah was fulfilled.*] It is apparent, (as the late judicious Mr. Jeffrey has observed in his True Grounds, &c. p. 110.) that the accomplishment of this prophecy could not be the end they proposed to themselves in their unbelief; and consequently that the expression ἵνα πληρωθῇ must be rendered as it is here: which may be applied to several other passages; and shews, by the way, how precarious that remark of Mr. Pierce is, by which he would make that phrase an argument, that the scripture introduced by it is quoted, not in any instance by way of accommodation, but always according to its original design and literal meaning.

[b] *Hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?*] I apprehend this phrase may allude to the habit generally worn by the easterns, and especially by persons of rank, which was a long robe without sleeves; so that when the arm was stretched out to perform any action which required strength, it would appear uncovered. (Compare Isa. lii. 10.) In this connection it seems strongly to imply, that whenever true faith is produced in the mind, it is to be considered as the effect of a divine energy. See Eph. i. 19, and Col. ii. 12.

SECT. CXLIX

John XII. 40

ficient and proper methods of conviction, were at length given up by God to a judicial hardness and blindness; [*as*] the same prophet *Isaiah says elsewhere*, (Isa. vi. 10.) "Having refused to "hearken to the voice of God, *he has* in righ- "teous judgment *blinded their eyes, and harden- "ed their heart*;[c] *lest they should* (as he adds in "the name of God) *see with their eyes, and "understand with their heart, and be converted, "and I should heal* and save *them*, which, after "such obstinate perverseness, I am determined "that I never will." (Compare Mat. xiii. 14, 15, Vol. I. p. 359. and Acts xxviii. 27.)

because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 *These things Isaiah spake when he saw his glory*,[d] even the glory of Christ, who was then the medium of the Divine manifestation, *and spake of him* and of his times in the awful words mentioned above, which had their terrible accomplishment in the men of this generation.

41 These things said Esaias when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 *Nevertheless*, at this very time *there were many even of the rulers* themselves *who* were inwardly convinced that he was the Messiah, and *believed on him* as such, still expecting that he would by some surprising providence be raised to the throne of Israel; *but they did not* think it convenient as yet to *confess* the convictions of their own hearts concerning [*him*,]

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also, many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they

[c] *He has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart.*] As God is said to *harden the heart of Pharaoh* in one place, while in another it is said *he hardened his own heart*; (Exod. ix. 12, and viii. 15, 32.) and as we ought to be very tender of ascribing to God any thing that looks like a necessitating influence to impel men to sin I apprehend that all we are here to understand by God's blinding and hardening these Jews is, that he permitted them to grow more and more prejudiced against the gospel, and, for wise reasons, acted in such a manner as he knew would in fact be abused by them to an increase of those prejudices. The learned, by consulting the originals of the places below, may see instances of a phraseology nearly resembling and illustrating this. Compare Lev. xiii. 3; Ezek. xiii. 19, 22; xiv. 9; xx. 25; Gen. xli. 13; Jer. i. 10; iv. 20; and Acts x. 15; where a person is said to do what he permits, or what he declares or foretels.—The evangelist in this quotation has not confined himself exactly to the words of the prophet, but the sense is plainly the same; and nothing was more usual with the Jews than to quote scripture in this way. See Surenhusius, de Formulis allegandi, p. 367.

[d] *When he saw his glory.*] These words seem so plainly to refer to Christ, that I cannot but approve the argument which the learned Bishop Pearson draws from Isa. vi. 1, to prove that Christ was the Jehovah that spoke to the prophet. (Pearson on the Creed, p. 125.) Dr. Clarke indeed explains it of *seeing the Father's glory*: (Script. Doct. of Trin. p. 58.) But it is difficult to say on that supposition, what the evangelist intended by adding that clause [*and spake of him*:] and it would be quite unexampled to suppose that *αυτὸν* has two such different significations in the same line, as that the meaning should be, he saw the Father's glory, and spake of the Son. See Vitringa on Isa. vi. 1, p. 143; & *seq.*

did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue.

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

on account of the declared enmity of *the Pharisees* against him, *lest* by them *they should be cast out of the synagogue*, and be exposed to the great ignominy and secular detriment which necessarily attended such a sentence. *For* 43 *they* were such thoughtless and mean-spirited creatures, that they *loved the praise of men more than the praise of God;* and durst not face the contempt of their fellow-mortals even to secure the approbation of their Maker. (Compare John v. 44, Vol. I. p. 277, 278.) This was the state of things at Jerusalem, and this the effect of Christ's entrance into it, as related above.

SECT. CXLIX. John XII. 42

MARK IX. 12. And on the morrow [in the morning] *when they were come from Bethany, [as he returned into the city,] he was hungry. [MAT. XXI. 18.]*

But though the malice of his enemies was known to Jesus, *and* he was sensible they were contriving to destroy him, yet *on the morrow-morning* he again set out with his disciples for Jerusalem: and *when they were come from Bethany, as he returned into the city, he was* very *hungry;* having come out early without eating, that he might neither incommode his friends, nor break in upon his secret or public devotions.[e] *And* as he was now *on the way, seeing* 13 *a single fig-tree*[f] *at a* considerable *distance, which had* a fine spread of *leaves* upon it, and therefore appeared to be one of the earlier kind, *he went* up *to it,* [*to see*] *if he could find any thing upon it* to satisfy his hunger; *and when he came to it, he found nothing thereon but leaves only; for* there was not so much as any fruit in the bud; by which it plainly appeared that, though it looked so beautiful, it was a barren tree. Now it is to be observed, that our Lord turned out of the way, because, as it was yet but early

Mark XI. 12

13 And seeing a fig-tree [in the way] afar off, having leaves, he came [to it], if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing [thereon] but leaves [only]; for the time of figs

[e] Might neither incommode his friends, nor break in upon his devotions.] This must certainly have been the reason of our Lord's hunger; for none can imagine that the hospitable and most sensibly obliged family of Lazarus would otherwise have suffered Jesus to come out without eating; or that if he had eaten that morning he would have been so hungry, before he had walked two miles, as to go out of the way to gather figs. To me there appears an inexpressible charm in this oblique hint; it shews how little the evangelists were inclined to enter into paneg.rics or reflections on the excellent character of their Master; and is a specimen of that simplicity and modesty, which might, independent of other arguments, almost compel the assent of persons of a like temper, to the wonderful story which they relate in so genuine and unaffected a manner.

[f] *Seeing a single fig-tree.*] Though in the first edition I had only followed Mark and rendered it, seeing a fig-tree, I think upon farther consideration, that συκην μιαν, which is the expression Matthew uses here (though our translators make no difference) should have been rendered *a single fig-tree*, which I have now inserted in the version.

SECT. CXLIX. Mark XI. 14

in the summer, *the time of* gathering *figs was not* [*yet*] come;[g] so that had this tree produced any, it might have been expected they would be growing still upon it. *And Jesus*, finding it to be a barren tree, that only made a promising appearance, but had produced no fruit, *said to it upon this occasion*,[h] As thou art fruitless now, continue always so; *let no man from henceforwards ever eat fruit of thee, nor any fruit hereafter ever grow upon thee. And his disciples heard* [*it*], and took notice of the words; *and* as soon as he had spoken them (though his disciples, as they were passing on,

was not *yet*. [Mat. XXI. 19.—]

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever: [Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever.] And his disciples heard *it*; [and

[g] *The time of figs was not* [*yet*] come.] I shall not trouble the reader with an account of all the strange *solutions* which have been given to the difficulty which immediately arises in the mind on reading this clause; nor with the particular reasons which may be offered against each. The best view of them all, that I can recollect, may be had by consulting Witsius, in his Meletemata; and I think the best solution may be seen in Mr. Hallet's Notes and Discourses, Vol. II. p. 114—124. It is certain, as he has there proved from incontestible authority, and we have observed elsewhere (note[b], on Luke vi. 1, Vol. I. p. 280), that the climate of Judea being abundantly warmer than ours, the pas over, though never later than April, commonly fell at the beginning of their harvest, that is, of their summer, which is there vehemently hot, not only in May, but in March and April; (in which last this passover probably fell:) compare Josh. iii. 15; iv. 19; v. 10, 11; and 1 Chron. xii. 15. (See also Lev. xxiii. 15—17, compared with Exod. ix. 31, 32 and Ruth ii. 23.) Now it is equally certain that one, and that the most delicate kind of figs, was ripe in Judea at the beginning of summer (as we have a fine sort in England which are ripe before our harvest, having put out the autumn before, and stood the whole winter): see Hos. ix. 10; Mich. vii. 1; Nah. iii. 12; Jer. xxiv. 2; Cant. ii. 11—13; and Isa. xxviii. 4. And the fig-tree opening its leaves, which every body knows do not appear till after the fruit, is spoken of as a sign of approaching summer, Mat. xxiv. 32. Our Lord therefore at this time might well expect to find fruit on this tree, since the time of gathering even these early figs was not yet come, which if it had, there would have been no room for the expectation, or the curse which followed it.—That καιρος συκων does not signify, as some have fancied, a kindly season for figs, but the time of gathering them in, I think the learned Bishop Kidder has abundantly proved. (See his Demonstration of the Messiah, § ii. p. 38, 39.) Compare Matt. xxi. 34; Mark xii. 2; and Ruth ii. 23.—It is true this interpretation of the story, though incomparably easier than any other I know, will require a transposition of the clause before us, as if it had been said, *He came, if haply he might find any thing thereon; for the time of figs was not* yet; *and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves.* But no interpretation whatever can make the last clause, as we read it, a reason for what stands immediately before it, that he found nothing but leaves; for it is well known, that if our common fig-trees have no young figs on them in March or April, they can produce none that year. None can deny another transposition of the like kind in the same evangelist, Mark xvi. 3, 4, (sect. cxciv.) both of them probably being occasioned by an accidental interlineation in the *original*, and a mistake of some early transcriber, who did not bring in the interlined clause exactly in its due place. See instances of the like kind, Gen. xiii. 10, and Josh. xxii. 32.—And if with Heinsius, Knatchbull, and Gataker, we should here read ὁ instead of ὅ, and render it, *where he was it was the season of figs*, we must admit of the same transposition, and consequently should gain no advantage at all, by a version which (as all learned men know) is very harsh, and attended with an inelegancy and impropriety which this would be no proper place to examine.

[h] *And Jesus said to it upon this occasion.*] It is plain that in this place this must be the sense of that phrase, Jesus answered and said, Compare note[f], on Mat. xi. 25. Vol. I. p. 325, 326.

presently the fig-tree withered away.] [Mat. XXI.—19.]

did not observe it at that time), *the fig-tree immediately withered away*; Christ intending by that significant action to intimate that the curse of God should thus wither and destroy the Jewish nation, which he had before compared to an unfruitful fig-tree. (See Luke xiii. 6—9, sect. cxvi. p. 128.)

SECT. CXLIX. Mark XI. 14

IMPROVEMENT.

How evidently necessary is the operation of divine grace to conquer the *prejudices* of a sinful heart; since even the *preaching* of *Christ* himself, enforced by all his stupendous *miracles*, could not overcome those prejudices without it! And how cautious should sinners be, that they do not *stop their ears* to the joyful sound of the gospel, and *shut their eyes* against its glorious light; lest God should leave them to their own delusions, and in his righteous judgment *seal them up* under final blindness and impenitence! Then will they never *be converted and healed*; but die with that poison in all the faculties of their souls, which will make them for ever restless and miserable. John XII. 37 38, 40

Can we find words sufficient to express the madness of these *Pharisees*, who, while they were in their consciences convinced that *Jesus was the Christ*, *would not confess* that conviction, and publicly pay their homage to him, *because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God?* Strange infatuation of the human mind! that it should be capable of believing *there is a God*, and yet of preferring the *creatures* before him; and should sometimes imagine the vain breath of popular applause or popular censure so considerable, as that God should be offended to please man; and all the honours and rewards of his heavenly presence lost, to secure a little regard from those who are perishing in their crimes, and will ere long be themselves the objects of *everlasting shame and contempt*. 42 43

May none of us ever indulge such a temper, or ever rest in an empty profession; lest, being like the *fig-tree* before us, *which had leaves*, but no *fruit*, the *curse of Christ* should be pronounced upon us, which would *immediately wither* us amidst all our verdure! Let us remember that this was intended as one of those significant actions by which the holy messengers of God frequently intimated approaching judgments. Happy would it have been if some, instead of searching out objections against it, had seriously considered its design, and the sad aspect with which it looks on those who, like them, *receive the grace of God in vain!* Mark XI. 13, 14 Mat. XXI. 10.

SECT. CL.

Christ arriving at Jerusalem, visits the temple again; and, after a repeated effort to reform the continued abuses there, discourses with the people in a manner which farther exasperates the priests; and in the evening goes out of the city. Mark XI. 15—19; John XII. 44, *to the end.*

MARK XI. 15.

SECT. CL. Mark XI. 15.

AND, soon after the fig-tree had been cursed, *they come to Jerusalem; and Jesus entering*, as he had done the day before, *into the temple*, observed, as he was passing through the court of the Gentiles, that the people who had polluted it by their traffick were seated there again; and being displeased to see that sacred place so shamefully profaned, he presently renewed his testimony against them, and *began to drive out them that sold and bought in* the limits of *the temple*,[a] *and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and* also *the seats of them that sold doves: And* he *permitted not that any one*, for the sake of shortening his way, *should carry any* burden or any kind of *vessel through* the courts of *the temple*; but strictly insisted on a due reverence to it, as a place that was entirely set apart to God's immediate service. *And he taught* them, at large, the evil of such prac-

MARK XI. 15.

AND they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught,

[a] *To drive out them that sold and bought in the temple.*] The time when this was done is fixed by Mark, to the day after Jesus made his public entry into Jerusalem, and so (as was observed before, note[c], on Mat. xxi. 12, p. 289.) this must have been a different fact from that related by Matthew, which he has introduced on the preceding day, before the shoutings of the children. We have supposed it, therefore, to be repeated by our Lord; for as it is improbable that he would not purge the temple on the day of his triumphant entry, when Mark expressly says, that *he looked round about upon all things*; so it is plainly intimated here that he did it, after his return from Bethany, on the next day. Nor is it at all unlikely that, after Jesus was departed out of the city, there would be people enough, if it were only out of opposition to him, who would be ready to encourage the traders (some of whom might, perhaps, be new comers) to return again to their places. And Jesus therefore seems, (as Mr. Whiston has observed) to have asserted the regard that was due to the temple now, with more severity and exactness than he had done the day before, not suffering any one so much as to carry a vessel through the temple: which is a circumstance not mentioned either by Matthew or Luke in their account of the transactions of the preceding day. (See sect. cxlvii.)—But I see no foundation at all for Mr. Whiston's conjecture, that on the former day Christ drove them out of *the Jews court*, and now out of that of the Gentiles; for it is no way probable, that the traders were ever allowed to introduce their wares into the inner-court, for which the Jews had a peculiar reverence. See Mr. Whiston's View of the Harmony, p. 131, and Dr. Whitby's note on Mark xi. 17.

saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

tices; *saying to them, Is it not written*, (as I observed but yesterday,) "*My house shall be* "*called an house of prayer*, and that not only "for the Jews themselves, but (as the prophet "says,) *for* the sons of the stranger, that join "themselves to the Lord, or for those pious "proselytes who from *all* the neighbouring *na*-"*tions* shall resort to it?" (Isa. lvi. 6, 7.) *But you have* turned it to another use, and *made it* in effect, *a den of robbers*, by suffering people here to carry on their trades, and to profane the place in which the Gentiles are to worship God, by scandalous extortion and unlawful gain. (Compare Mat. xxi. 12, 13, and Luke xix. 45, 46, p. 289, 290.)

SECT. CL. Mark XI. 17.

JOHN XII. 44. Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

And then, as considerable numbers of people were now gathered about him, *Jesus cried*, or proclaimed with a loud voice, saying, Be it known unto you all, that in these extraordinary steps which I take for the reformation of abuses, and the vindication of God's house, I act by his own immediate direction and authority; and *he that* cordially *believes in me, believeth not in me* alone, *but in him that sent me*, and thereby does an honour to the Father himself. *And he that sees me*, and regards me with a lively faith, *does* also in effect *see him that sent me*, as the perfections of the Father are displayed in me; whereas, he that shuts his eyes against me, excludes the only means of being brought to the true knowledge of him. For, full of the inspiration of his blessed Spirit, *I am come a light into the world, that every one who* really *believes in me, might not* any longer *abide in darkness*, but might attain to the knowledge of all necessary truth, and the enjoyment of the most solid and excellent happiness. *And if any one* of you *hear my words* which I am so frequently and freely speaking, *and will not believe* in me, *I do not* now *condemn him*, or immediately execute judgment upon him; *for* (as I formerly declared, John iii. 17, sect xxvi.) *I am not come* at present *to condemn the world*, or to perform any work of wrath and terror, whatever ill usage I may meet with in it; *but* the design of my appearance is mild and gentle, and I am come *to save the world*, and to make its inhabitants happy for time and for

John XII. 44.

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

45

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.

46

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

47

SECT. CL. eternity, if they will be so wise as to hearken to the proposals I offer. Nevertheless, though I do not immediately judge any, yet *he that*

John XII. 48. *rejects me, and does not receive my words*, will not escape final condemnation, but will find, to his surprise and confusion, that he *has one that judges him*: for *the word that I have spoken*, though heard with indifference from day to day, is recorded in the book of God's remembrance; and as the time will come when the proposals I have made shall be reviewed, [*even*] *that* very word *shall judge him in the last* awful *day*, [b] as the tenor of it is so excellent, that to have rejected it will prove a man ignorant of God, and alienated from true religion and good-

49 ness. *For I have not spoken of myself*, either on my own motion, or on any precarious conclusions drawn from principles divinely taught; *but the Father who sent me, he gave me* ample instructions, and *a* particular *commandment, what I should say, and what I shall* yet *speak* in that part of my work which is still before me.

50 *And* I will faithfully conform myself to his instructions, whether men be pleased or offended with me; for *I know that his commandment is* of the greatest consequence, and that *eternal life* depends upon the knowledge and observance of it; and *therefore* I would by no means vary in a matter of so much importance; but *whatever I say* unto you, *I speak* it *just as the Father has given* it *me in charge*, and alter nothing in the message he has sent me to deliver. So that the doctrine which I preach should be received as coming from the Father, and by rejecting it you will be guilty of despising his authority.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

Mark XI. 18. Thus did our Lord continue to reform abuses, and to teach the people with the utmost serious-

MARK XI. 18.

[b] *That* very word *shall judge him*, &c. ὁ λογος ὁν ελαλησα, εκεινος κρινει αυτον.] Our Lord, by this manner of speaking, represents *his word* as a *person* that should sit in judgment upon unbelievers at the last day. (Compare Heb. iv. 12.) But I can see no ground for Mr. Fleming's interpretation, (Christology, Vol. I. p. 136,) who would render it, *The Logos, which I have spoken of, shall judge him*; as if he had said "Though it is not my present business to do it, yet I have a commission from my Father, which is hereafter to take place, when I shall appear worthy of that great name." I do not recollect that our Lord had given himself the title of Logos in any of his discourses with the Jews; and therefore can see no reason to suppose such a reference to it.

And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

ness and earnestness, on the second day of that week in which he suffered. *And the scribes and chief priests* were much offended when they *heard* [*of it*,] *and* diligently *sought how they might* find out some expedient to *destroy him*, *for they* not only envied, but *dreaded him*, *because all the people were* visibly *struck* into attention and wonder *at his doctrine*, and seemed disposed to receive it with a respect proportionable to its importance and solemnity. SECT. CL. Mark XI. 18

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

And, that he might give them no unseasonable advantages against him, *when the evening was come*, *he went out of the city*, and spent the night as he had done before, in a retired place with his disciples. 19

IMPROVEMENT.

How hard is it to purge a carnal heart, and disentangle it from the snares of a deceitful world! No sooner were these *traders driven from the temple*, but they *return* to it again; and are as busy the *next day* in the pursuit of their unlawful gain, as they had been before. And thus how often are *convictions stifled* by the love of this world! And if the voice of conscience, or the word of God, may interrupt us for a while in our unlawful courses, yet where it may affect our worldly interest, how ready are we to return to them again: and with what difficulty are we brought so far to lay aside our earthly projects, as not to take them with us into the *house of God!* Purge us, *O Lord*, from every irregular desire; pursue and perfect thine own work; and *incline our hearts unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness!* (Psal. cxix. 36.) Mark xi. 15, 17

Most important is that *proclamation* which *our Lord* made in the *temple*, and is still making to us in his word: *believing in him, we believe in the Father*; and *seeing him, we see the Father*. Let us be ready therefore to receive him out of regard to his divine authority, as well as with a view to our own happiness; for without him we can have no access unto *the Father*, nor can we ever see him, as a reconciled God.—The sacred *light* which he diffuses around him, is not intended merely to amuse our eyes with pleasing speculations, but to animate our hearts with holy affections, and to *guide our feet into the way of peace*. (Luke i. 79.) If we desire therefore to escape an *abode* in eternal *darkness*, and to see light everlasting, let us faithfully follow him: otherwise we are *condemned already*, and *that word which he spake* will become to us *a savour of death unto death*, (2 Cor. ii. 16.) and will *judge us in the last* solemn and dreadful *day*, when it shall sentence those who would not be saved by it. John xii. 44, 45

SECT. CL. Ver. 49, 50

Let us now make *that word* the rule of our life which shall then be the rule of our judgment. We may most comfortably venture our eternal all on the exact veracity of it. Christ has perfectly fulfilled the commission he received from his Father, as one that was *faithful to him that appointed him*; and stands so completely approved in his sight, that our only hope is, that we also may be accepted in him, and find mercy and grace for his sake.

SECT. CLI.

Jesus returning to the city in the morning, his disciples observe that the fig-tree was withered away: being come into the temple, he confounds the members of the sanhedrim, who questioned his authority, and reproves them by the parable of the complaisant but disobedient son. Mat. XXI. 20—32; Mark XI. 20, *to the end*; XII. 1.— Luke XX. 1—9.—

MARK XI. 20.

SECT. CLI. Mark XI. 20

NOW Jesus, having spent the night with his disciples in a retired place without the city, returned again to Jerusalem on the third day of the week in which he suffered: *and in the morning, as they were passing by* the spot of ground where he had cursed the barren fig-tree on the day before, *when the disciples saw the fig-tree*,[a] *dried up from the* very *roots*, and so entirely stripped of its leaves that, though it stood at some distance from the road, they easily discerned the change, *they* were greatly struck at the sight, and *wondered, saying*; *How soon is the fig-tree* that stands yonder *withered away*, though yesterday it seemed so flourishing! *And Peter, recollecting* what had passed, took notice of it to Jesus, and *said unto him, Rabbi, behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst* but yesterday, *is* now quite *withered away*.

MARK XI. 20. AND in the morning, as they passed by, [when the disciples,] saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots, [they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away?] [MAT. XXI. 20.]

21 And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold the fig-tree, which thou cursedst, is withered away.

22 *And Jesus answering, says unto them*, See that you *have* a stedfast *faith in God*, and a full confidence in his power and fidelity, when you feel

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Have faith in

[a] *When the disciples saw the fig-tree.*] Matthew relates this story of the fig tree, as if the notice that the disciples took of it, and the account that Jesus gave them of the power of faith, followed immediately upon his cursing it. But Mark has so expressly referred these circumstances to the next morning, and so particularly mentions Peter's recollecting what had passed before, that it is plain his order must be followed here, which Matthew has neglected, that he might give us the whole of the story together.

God: [MAT. XXI. 21.—]

23 For verily I say unto you, That [if ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree; but also] whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass: [It shall be done, *and*] he shall have whatsoever he saith. [MAT. XXI. —21.]

24 [And] therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire [*and* shall ask in prayer,] believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*. [MAT. XXI. 22.]

25 And when ye stand praying, for-

him secretly moving on your spirits, to stir you up to any miraculous operation.[b] *For I assuredly say unto you, That if you have* such a firm and stedfast *faith, and do not doubt* of God's being ready to stand by you, *you shall not only do* such miracles as *this of the fig-tree, but also* shall perform far greater things; yea, *whosoever*, under such an impulse, and with such a believing temper, *shall* attempt any thing as difficult and extraordinary, as if he were to *say to this mountain* which we are now crossing, *Be thou removed* from hence, *and thrown into the* distant *sea: and shall not* at all *doubt in his mind, but* stedfastly *believe that what he says shall come to pass, it shall* accordingly *be done*, [*and*] *shall be to him just as he says.* *And for* 24 *this reason*, to encourage you boldly to act as God shall direct and instigate you, *I say unto you*, That *whatsoever things you shall* [*desire*] *and ask* of God *in prayer*, to make it manifest that you are sent of him, and to confirm your doctrine; if you *believe that you* shall actually *receive them*, however difficult the things may be that you request, yet in such circumstances they shall certainly be done, *and you shall have them.*

But still I would subjoin one caution; that 25 if you expect your prayers should prevail with God, you must take care to offer them in love, as well as in faith; *and when you stand praying*,[c]

SECT. CLI. Mark XI. 23

[b] *Have faith in God*, &c.] It is certain that the attempt of performing miracles in public, was a remarkable instance of faith in the Divine power and fidelity; for they were generally introduced by some solemn declaration of what was intended, which was in effect a prediction of immediate success: (so Peter says, Acts iii. 6, *In the name of Jesus Christ, Rise up and walk*; ix. 34, *Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole*; and again, ver. 40, *Tabitha, Arise.*) And in pronouncing this, the person speaking pawned all his credit as a messenger from God, and consequently all the honour and usefulness of his future life, on the immediate miraculous energy to attend his words, and to be visibly exerted on his uttering them. And hence it is, that such a firm courageous faith is so often urged on those to whom such miraculous powers were given.—But what kind of intimation of God's intended miraculous interposition the apostles in such cases felt on their minds, it is impossible for any, without having experienced it, to know. It is therefore an instance of their wisdom, that they never pretend to describe it, since no words could have conveyed the idea.

[c] *When you stand praying.*] There is no room to doubt, that standing was their usual posture when they prayed; as Dr. Lightfoot observes with respect to the Jews, (Hor. Heb. on Mat. vi. 5;) and the learned author of the Inquiry into the Worship of the Primitive Church, (chap. ii. § 1.) has shewn it to be the practice of the first ages of the Christian church. (Compare Mat. vi. 5; and Luke xviii. 11.) But as the word [*stand*] has no particular significancy here, I might have omitted it in the translation as the Prussian editors have frequently done, but that I do not choose to multiply expletives in the sacred writings.

SECT. CLI. Mark XI. 25

in the presence of that Majesty of heaven whom you have offended by so many provocations, you should *forgive, if you have any matter* of complaint *against any; that your Father in heaven* 26 *may also forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive* even your most cruel enemies, and much more your offending brethren, *neither will your Father in heaven forgive you your trespasses*: (compare Mat. vi. 14, 15; xviii. 35.) And if your trespasses be not forgiven, you have little reason to hope for such extraordinary interpositions in answer to your prayers; or if those interpositions were to be granted, you would receive no manner of advantage from them, while amidst all the glory of working the most amazing miracles, you lay under the load of guilt and condemnation.

give, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is heaven forgive your trespasses.

27 *And* after Jesus had been thus discoursing with his disciples by the way, *they come again to Jerusalem; and when he was come into the temple, it came to pass, that as he was walking* there,[d] *while he taught the people* who flocked around him, *and* zealously *preached the gospel* of the kingdom to all that were desirous to be instructed in it, *the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people*,[e] who were contriv-

27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and [when he was come into the temple,] [LUKE, it came to pass, that] as he was walking, [LUKE, as he taught the people, and preached the gospel,] [LUKE, came [illegible] him] the chief p[illegible]

[d] *It came to pass, that as he was walking.*] Luke, who tells this, as he does several other stories, in a less circumstantial manner, says it was *on one of those days*: but the insertion of that clause here would have been improper, considering how particularly the date of this fact is fixed by Mark. If the reader should happen elsewhere to meet with the omission of a word or two in any of the evangelists, (which he very seldom will,) I hope he will not condemn it, till he reflect whether it may not be accounted for in the same manner.

[e] *The chief priests—and the elders of the people.*] These are titles that frequently occur, but it is not easy to fix a determinate idea to them.—By the *chief priests*, I think we may understand any peculiar distinction in the Aaronic family: so that it may include the high priest, his deputy or sagan, any of the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests who might happen to be in waiting, and likewise any of those whom the Talmudists called Catholicin, Amarcalin and Memunnim, who (if their testimony may be credited) were appointed to preside over the other priests and Levites, and to regulate the watch, the singers, &c. A summary account of them may be seen in Reland. Antiq. Heb. part ii. cap. iii. § 4, 5.—By the *elders of the people*, some would understand those representatives who were called Viri Stationarii, that were appointed to attend in their courses at the hours of morning and evening sacrifice in the name of the whole Israelitish nation; but I rather suppose it may signify the members of the grand sanhedrim, to whom that title most eminently and properly belonged; which is the more probable, as they were the persons under whose cognizance the late action of Christ in purging the temple would most naturally fall. These with the persons above-mentioned, probably appeared in a considerable company, on purpose to daunt him, and to bear an united testimony against him, if any thing exceptionable should fall from him on this occasion.

SECT. CLI. Luke XX. 2

and the scribes, and the elders [of the people]: [MAT. XXI. 23. —LUKE XX. 1.]

LUKE XX. 2. And spake unto him, saying, Tell us by what authority dost thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority [MARK, to do these things]? [MAT. XXI. —23. MARK XI. 28.]

ing his destruction, *came upon him* in a body, with a strong desire to confound and overbear him: *and* they *spake to him* in such a manner, as to express their high displeasure at what had lately passed, *saying*, Thou hast here taken upon thee to reform the temple, which is our province alone, and hast in a tumultuous manner driven out those who had our permission to traffick in the outer court; we insist upon it, therefore, that thou *tell us* roundly and plainly, *by what authority thou dost* all *these* extraordinary *things? and who he is that gave thee this authority* on which thou presumest *to do them?*

3 And [Jesus] answered and said unto them, I will also ask you [MARK, one question], and answer me, [*even* one thing, which if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things.] [MAT. XXI. 24. MARK XI. 29.]

And Jesus, that he might at once reprove the impropriety of the question in those circumstances, and in effect return an unexceptionable, though oblique, answer to it, *said to them in reply, I will also ask you one* plain *question* on this occasion: *and* pray *answer me* this *one thing, which if you tell me, I will likewise* give you all the satisfaction you can desire, and directly *tell you*, if you do yet indeed need to be told, *by what authority I do these things.*

4 The baptism of John, [whence was it?] from heaven, or of men? [MARK, answer me.] MAT. XXI. 25.—MARK XI. 30.]

You all remember *the baptism of John*, which was attended by such multitudes of people, and even by many of your leading men: (compare Mat. iii. 7, sect. xvi.) Now I would gladly know what you think of its original; *From whence was it* that he had his commission? was it *from heaven*, as he openly professed? *or* was it merely a contrivance *of men? Answer me* this, and then I will immediately resolve your question.

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say [unto us], Why then believed ye him not? [MAT. XXI.—25. MARK XI. 31.]

And they were perfectly confounded at so unexpected a demand, and *reasoned among themselves*, as it was natural to do, after this manner, *saying, If we shall say*, That John's baptism was *from heaven, he will say to us, Why therefore did ye not believe him*, and yield to his well-known and repeated testimony of me? *But if we shall say*, That his baptism had no divine warrant, but was merely the device *of* some wicked and designing *men*, who by that grave solemnity endeavoured to introduce their own ambitious schemes, *we* have reason to *fear* that *all the populace* who are here assembled *will* rise up and *stone us; for they are all* firmly *persuaded that John was really a prophet* sent of

6 But and if we [shall] say, Of men; [we fear] all the people will stone us: for they be [all] persuaded that John was a prophet [MARK indeed.] [MAT. XXI. 26. MARK XI. 32.]

SECT. CLI.

God; and as vast numbers of them were baptised by him, they will never bear to hear him vilified, either as an enthusiast or impostor.

Luke XX. 7 *And* therefore *they* declined to tell him what were their real sentiments, and *answered Jesus by saying, We cannot* yet certainly *tell whence [it was]*; for it is a question which still lies before the sanhedrim, and which they have not yet expressly determined.

7 And they answered [Mark, and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell] whence it was. [Mat. XXI. 27.—Mark XI. 33.—]

8 *And Jesus* immediately *replied and said unto them, Neither do I* think it, at all necessary to *tell you by what authority I do these things*; for the other question naturally requires to be determined first,[f] and when you think proper to decide that, you may easily perceive that the same answer will serve for both.[g]

8 And Jesus [Mark, answering] said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. [Mat. XXI.—27. Mark XI. 33.]

Mark XII. 1 *And* having thus silenced the members of the great council, who had taken upon them to examine him for his late proceedings, *he began to speak unto them, [and] to the people* who were now assembled, *by* several *parables*, of which we shall give a more particular account.

Mark XII. 1.—And he began to speak unto them [and to the people] by parables. [Luke XX. 9.—]

Mat. XXI. 28 And first, he said to the scribes and Pharisees, with whom he had been discoursing, You have evaded a direct answer to my question, *but what think you* of your own conduct in these circumstances, and of all the high professions you make of an extraordinary reverence for God, and zeal in his service? I will plainly tell you my thoughts of it, which are very naturally connected with the present subject.

Mat. XXI. [illegible] But what think [illegible] A certain man [illegible] two sons, and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

There was *a man* who *had two sons; and coming to the first, he said, Son go* directly away and *work to-day in my vineyard*, where thou knowest there is business to do that requires thine attendance. *And he answered* in a very 29 rude and undutiful manner, *and said, I will not:*

29 He answered and said, I will not

[f] The other question naturally requires to be determined first.] That singular turn which the reader will observe to be given to this answer of our Lord in the paraphrase, by which I think the propriety of it to be much illustrated, I owe to that very accurate and learned friend who suggested the substance of note [g] on John vii. 22, p. 48

[g] The same answer will serve for both.] This was plainly the case; for as, on the one hand, the express testimony which John bore to Christ must be a sufficient proof of his Divine mission, if that of John was allowed; (since, according to a Jewish maxim, *The testimony of one prophet was sufficient to confirm the authority of another*); so Christ had spoken in such an honourable manner of John, that to condemn John as an impostor, would imply a like censure on the character of Jesus.

SECT. CLI.

Mat. XXI. 30

but afterwards he repented, and went.

but afterwards considering better of it, *he repented* that he had used his father so ill; *and*, to make the best amends he could, he *went* into the vineyard, and laboured diligently there.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, Sir; and went not.

And when the first had given so undutiful an answer to his father, *he came to the second, and said* to him *in the same manner* as he had done to his brother: *and he*, being a smooth plausible lad, *answered*, with great submission and readiness, *and said, Sir, [I am going]* this moment to obey your commands:[h] and *yet*, after all, *he went not* to the vineyard, but spent the whole day elsewhere.

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first.—

Now I would leave it to yourselves to judge, 31 *Which of the two* youths I have been speaking of *did the will of [his] father*, and with which of them he would, on the whole, be best pleased? and without any hesitation *they say to him*, Undoubtedly *the first* of them.

—Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

Then *Jesus*, upon this, *says to them*, The application of this parable is very easy; for thus it is, that notwithstanding your professions of a regard to God, yet in your practice you are disobedient children, and reject his gospel; and *verily I say unto you, That* even the most abandoned sinners of the age, such as *the publicans and common prostitutes*, are much more open to conviction, and more likely to be wrought upon than you; and so many of them have already been awakened to repentance, that their example might *lead you the way into the kingdom of God;* but, with all your pretences to sanctity, you will not follow them.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And ye, when

For, though you 32 have not integrity enough freely to own it, you know, in your own consciences, that *John came* not *unto you* in a suspicious manner, but *in the way of righteousness; and* did, in all his ministry, maintain the uniform character of an upright and pious man, as well as of a plain and awakening preacher, yet *you believed him not; but the publicans and harlots*, of whom I spake, *believed him: and you* were still so obstinate, that even *when you saw [it]*, and perceived a

[h] *Sir, I am going.*] This was a proper emblem of the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees; who addressed God under the most honourable titles, and professed the greatest readiness and zeal in his service, while their whole lives were a series of disobedience and rebellion.

SECT. CLI. Mat. XXI. 32

growing reformation among the most abandoned of mankind, yet you *did not afterwards repent*, [*so as*] *to believe him.* (Compare Luke vii. 29, 30, Vol. I. p. 320.) And therefore I solemnly warn you, that your condition will another day be worse than theirs; and that you shall see those whom you now despise and abhor, entering into the glory from which you shall be excluded.

ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xxi. 28—31

How little do the most specious *pretences of piety* signify, if they are not animated by the heart, and confirmed by the life! How vain are all the complimental *forms of religion*, when addressed to that God who penetrates all the secrets of the soul, and can have complacency in nothing but real and solid goodness! Yet how many are there, who are free of their *promises* both to God and man, but always fail when the time of *performance* comes! And how many, with these unhappy *rulers* in

32 Israel, go on to pride themselves in a kind of external nearness to God, and perhaps in a boasted commission from him, who are themselves so *far from his kingdom*, that even *publicans and harlots*, who did not pretend to any religion, are more like to be brought into it than they, as being more open to a conviction of their sin and danger, and so more ready to embrace an offered Saviour! Let us dread the guilt of *receiving the grace of God in vain*, lest by rejecting the calls of the gospel, and abusing the privileges we enjoy, our hearts be *hardened through the deceitfulness of sin* so as to perish in impenitence and unbelief.

23 In vain do we, like these *Pharisees*, inquire into the evidences of *Christ's authority*, if we are not heartily resolved to submit to it. Yet with such cavillers and hypocrites must his ministers

24—27 expect to meet. May they learn, by the example of their great Master, to answer them with the *meekness of wisdom*, and to join the *sagacity of the serpent* with the *gentleness* and *innocence of the dove!*

Mark xi. 23, 24

The promises which are made to a *miraculous faith in prayer*, are not indeed *our immediate concern*; but we may truly infer from them some encouragement in favour of the *prayer of faith*, on whatever account, and in whatever circumstances it be offered.

25, 26 At least we may infer the necessity of *forgiving injuries*, if we desire that our petitions should be received with favour. Let us remember it; and labour to approach the throne of a *forgiving God*, with hearts not only clear of every malignant *passion*, but full of that cordial and universal *benevolence* which may engage us to pray for all men, and particularly for those who have least deserved our kindness, and seem least disposed to requite it.

SECT. CLII.

Christ utters the parable of the vineyard let out to unfaithful husbandmen; from which he takes occasion plainly to admonish the Jewish rulers of the danger and ruin they would incur by the schemes they were forming against him. Mat. XXI. 33, *to the end;* Mark XII.—1—12; Luke XX. 9—19.

MAT. XXI. 33.

SECT. CLII. Mat. XXI. 33

OUR Lord having thus reproved the priests and elders in the temple who had been questioning his authority, and shewn how inexcusable they were in not believing John, though they could not deny him to be sent of God, continued his discourse, and said to them and to the people, *Hear* now *another parable*, in which you are very nearly concerned, as your own consciences must quickly tell you: *There was a certain* man, a *master of a* considerable *family* and estate, *who planted a vineyard, and* spared no cost to render it fruitful; for he *made a* strong *hedge round it*, to preserve it from the incursion of men or beasts, *and digged* [*a place for*] *a wine-press in it*, [*or*] a large cavity which might serve as *a fat for the wine*, to receive the liquor when pressed from the grapes; [a] *and* he also *built a tower* in it for the accommodation and defence of the labourers; *and* then he *let it out to husbandmen*, who were to pay him a certain acknowledgment out of the produce of it; *and* he himself departed thence, and *took a journey for a long time into a distant country*.

Mat. XXI. 33. HEAR another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, [*or a place for* the wine fat], and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen; and went into a far country [Luke, for a long time.] [Mark XII.—1. Luke XX.—9.]

34 And [at the season], when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive [from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.] [Mark XII. 2. Luke XX. 10.—]

35 And the hus-

34 *And at the* proper *season, when the time of* gathering in *the fruit approached*, and a return was to be made him from the profits of it, *he sent his servants to the husbandmen* who had farmed it, *that he might receive from the husbandmen* that proportion *of the fruit of the vineyard* which was due to him for the rent. *And the husband-* 35 *men* wickedly conspiring to keep the vineyard

[a] *A fat for the wine.*] Matthew uses the word ληνος, and Mark ὑπολήνιον. The former signifies the *wine-press*, the other the *cavity under it*, in which the vessel was fixed which received the liquor pressed from the grapes. The one of these naturally implies the other; but our Lord might without any impropriety mention both.

SECT. CLII.

to themselves, instead of receiving them with due respect, and returning the appointed payment, *seized his servants, and beat one* of the chief of those who arrived first, *and sent him empty away; and* as the demand grew more pressing, they took up the weapons with which their Lord himself had furnished them for very different purposes, and *slew another, and stoned another*, till they had driven him away.

Mat. XXI. 35.

36 *And* when their lord heard the report of this their injustice, *he* did not immediately arm himself against them, but *sent again other servants to* treat with *them, more* in number, and higher in office *than the first: but* still persisting in their wickedness, *they did the same unto them; and* particularly *at him* [*who was the chief*] person employed to account with them, *they threw stones, and wounded him* dangerously *in the head, and sent him away* not only *empty*, but very dishonourably *and shamefully treated.*

Mark XXI. 5

And again the third [*time*] *he sent another* of his principal servants; *and him also they wounded*, as they had done the former, *and* even were so outrageous, that they *cast him out* of the vineyard, [*and*] *killed him: and* in like manner they assaulted *many others*, who came with, or after him, on the same errand, *beating some* of them, *and killing others* outright.

Luke XX. 13

Then the lord of the vineyard, being still unwilling to proceed to the last extremity with them, though they had been so very wicked and ungrateful in the treatment of his servants, *said* to them that were about him, *What shall I do* farther to reclaim them? *I will send my* own *son* to them.[b] *Having yet therefore one son*, who was *his well-beloved*, and the heir of the family, *he sent him also last of all to them*, as the only gentle expedient that remained, *saying, Perhaps they will reverence my son when they see him:*[c]

bandmen [caught] his servants, and beat one [and sent him away empty,] and killed another, and stoned another. [MARK XII. 3. LUKE XX.—10.]

36 [And] again, he sent [unto them] other servants, more than the first; and they did unto them likewise: [and at him *who was the chief* they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled,][LUKE, and empty.] [MARK XII. 4. LUKE XX. 11.]

MARK XII. 5. And again he sent another [the third *time*]; and him they [wounded also, and cast *him* out, and] killed: and many others, beating some, and killing some. [LUKE XX. 12.]

LUKE XX. 13. Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my—son. [MARK. Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last [of all] unto them, saying,] It may be they will reverence [my son] when they see him. [MAT. XXI. 37. MARK XII. 6.]

[b] *I will send my son.*] The question is not here how prudent it would have been in a human father to venture his son in such a case as this; for the power which God had of raising Christ from the dead, and making all his sufferings redound to his glory and happiness, quite alters the case. The design is to shew the patience of God, and the wickedness of the Jews by this emblem, than which nothing could be more expressive.

[c] *Perhaps they will reverence my son, &c.*] Numberless predictions in the Old and New Testament plainly shew, that God foresaw Christ's death as a certain event. This therefore, like many others, is merely

for surely they must needs have some respect for him, and will not presume to offer him any injury. *But when the husbandmen saw the son* come into the vineyard, instead of paying any due regard to him, *they* grew yet more outrageous in their wickedness, and *reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the* only *heir* of the whole estate; *come, let us kill him, and seize on his inheritance,*[d] *that* [*it*] *may be ours* from generation to generation, and no descendants of our master may remain to give any disturbance to us or our children in the possession of it. *And* with malignant hearts and cruel hands *they* fell upon their master's son, and *seized him; and,* fearing neither God nor man, they *cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him,*[e] exposing his dead body in a most contemptuous and insolent, as well as inhumane manner.

SECT. CLII. Mat. XXI. 38

Mat. XXI, 38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, [Luke, they reasoned among themselves saying,] This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance, [Luke, that it may be ours.] [Mark XII. 7. Luke XX. 14.]

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew *him.* [Mark XII. 8. Luke XX. 15—]

39

When therefore the Lord of the vineyard himself *cometh,* armed with a power which they will be utterly unable to resist, *what will he do,* think you, *to those* treacherous and cruel *husbandmen,* when he has them entirely at his disposal?

40

40 When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? [Mark II. 8.—Luke XX.—15.]

And, as the Jewish rulers did not understand that they themselves were these unfaithful husbandmen, *they say unto him,* There is no doubt but *he will wretchedly destroy those* wicked and incorrigible *wretches,* nor is the most tormenting death too severe for them to expect; *and* he *will* then *let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, who shall* faithfully *render him the fruits* of it *in their* proper *seasons.*

41

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

Thus did they, before they were aware, con-

an ornamental circumstance, which cannot without absurdity be applied in the interpretation of the parable.

[d] *Come, let us kill him,* &c.] If such a proposal would have been the height of folly as well as wickedness in these husbandmen, as it was so much the more proper to represent the part the Jewish rulers acted in the murder of Christ, which they were now projecting, and which they accomplished within three days. The admonition was most graciously given; but served only in an astonishing manner to illustrate that degree of hardness to which a sinful heart is capable of arriving.

[e] *And cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.*] So Matthew and Luke express it; but Mark has changed the order of the words, and says, *They killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard;* if we may not render that clause, *They both slew him, and cast him out* so as not to determine which was done first. One cannot suppose Christ uttered it both these ways; so that if there be no accidental transposition in Mark, he probably meant thereby to intimate what is hinted in the paraphrase, the exposing his dead body in a most daring defiance of public justice. Those that explain the *casting him out of the vineyard,* of *excommunication,* which preceded or attended the execution of a capital sentence, do not observe the proper import of the vineyard. See below, note t.

SECT. CLII.

demn themselves; and [*Jesus added,*] You have answered right: *he shall* indeed quickly *come, and destroy these husbandmen* of whom I speak, whoever they shall appear to be, with terrible severity, *and* will *give the vineyard to others.* Now all this was as if he had said, Consider your own concern in what you have heard: God has planted a church among you, and given you an excellent revelation of his will; abundant provision has been made, both for your protection and your improvement too: but you have ungratefully refused the fruits of obedience, which were so justly his due; and when he has frequently sent his servants the prophets, with one message and demand after another, you the rulers and teachers of Israel, to whom the cultivation of the vineyard has been committed, have treated them in a most ungrateful and barbarous manner: and now at last he has sent his son, and you are going to seize on him, and to add that murder which you are now contriving to the guilt of all your other crimes. I leave it therefore to your own consciences to judge what the event must be. And *for this reason* now *I say unto you* plainly, *That the kingdom of God,* which you have thus vilely and ungratefully abused, *shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation which shall bring forth the fruits thereof;* that is, his gospel shall be taken from you, and be carried to the Gentiles, who will have more regard to the favour shewn them, and improve it much better than you have done.

Luke XX. 16

Mat. XXI. 43

And when they heard this sad denunciation with which the parable concluded, and found that [*it*] was aimed at them, *they said, God forbid,* that this should be the case with regard to us, nor can we ever believe that it will.

Luke XX. 16

17 *And Jesus looked upon them* with great seriousness and solemnity in his countenance, *and said unto them, What is this then that is written?* (Ps. cxviii. 22, 23.) *Did you never read,* or never reflect upon, *this* remarkable passage *in the scriptures,* "*The stone which the builders refused, the* "*same is become the head-stone of the corner:*"

Luke XX. 16—[*Jesus said,*] He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. [Mark XII.—9.]

Mat. XXI. 43. Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Luke XX.—16. And when they heard *it,* they said, God forbid.

17 And [Jesus] beheld them and said [unto them] What is this then that is written? [Did ye never read [Mark, this] in the scriptures,] The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become

[*The head* stone *of the corner.*] This κεφαλην γωνιας, rather than *the chief cor-*
take to be the meaning of the words *ner-stone,* as it does not appear exactly to

the head of the corner: [This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?] [MAT. XXI. 42. MARK XII. 10, 11.]

"*this is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful* SECT. CLII.
"*in our eyes?*" Words which though they might seem to be accomplished in the exaltation of David to the Jewish throne, are in their highest sense applicable to the Messiah,[g] who, though disdainfully rejected by you scribes and Pharisees and rulers of the people, whose office it is to build up the church, is nevertheless chosen by God to be its great support and ornament. *And* therefore let me plainly tell you, 18
That *whosoever shall fall upon this stone*, that is, whosoever shall stumble at me and my doctrine, while I am here on earth in this humble form, he *shall be broken* and damaged by it; *but on whomsoever it shall fall*, when raised up to so glorious an eminence, *it shall* even *grind him to powder*,[h] like a brittle potsherd crushed by the weight of some huge stone falling upon it from on high: (compare Dan. ii. 44.) So whoever shall oppose me after my exaltation to glory, and the pouring out of my Spirit for the full revelation of my gospel and proof of my mission, he will bring upon himself aggravated guilt, and dreadful unavoidable destruction.

Luke XX. 17.

18 [And] whosoever shall fall upon [this] stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. [MAT. XXI. 44.]

And when the chief priests and the scribes and 19
Pharisees had heard his parables which he had now delivered, *they* were so provoked at what he had said, that even *in that very hour* they *sought to lay* their *hands on him*, that they might prosecute him even to death; *for they* plainly *perceived that he had spoken this parable* of the wicked husbandmen that should be destroyed

19—And [when] the chief priests and the scribes [and Pharisees had heard his parables, they] the same hour sought to lay hands on him; for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against

answer to ακρογωνιαιον (Eph. ii. 20, and 1 Pet. ii. 6,) which, as the connection in those places shews, (as well as the use of it in other authors,) signifies that great corner-stone which lay at the bottom of the building as its support. What is mentioned afterwards of this head-stone falling on a person, seems not to suit with the supposition of its being laid on or under the ground. Compare Zech. iv. 7.

[g] Though they might seem to be accomplished in the exaltation of David, &c.] Mr. Jeffery has justly observed (in his Review, p. 119.) that on the principles of Analogy this passage will be much to the present purpose though it should be confessed that Psal. cxviii. was immediately meant of David: as it will prove that the great builders of Israel might *refuse* one whom God intended for *the Head-stone of the corner*.

[h] *On whomsoever it shall fall*, &c.] Dr. Whitby supposes that here is an allusion to the two different ways of stoning among the Jews; the former, by throwing a person down upon a great stone; and the other, by letting a stone fall upon him. But as I cannot see that the latter was at all more dreadful than the former, since in such a case a quick dispatch might seem most desirable, it seems to me that the force and beauty of this pathetic passage would be in a great measure lost by such an interpretation.

SECT. CLII.

against them,[1] and had in effect set them all at defiance by the application of so signal a prophecy to himself. *But they feared the people* Mat. XXI. 46. who were then present in the temple, *because they esteemed him as a Prophet* sent from God, and would not have borne that immediate assault upon him which the rage of these rulers would otherwise have engaged them to make. *And* therefore, not daring for the present to attempt to seize him with an open violence, *they left him and went away* to take counsel in private against him, and to lay a plot for his life, which they might execute with less hazard to themselves.

them.] [MAT. XXI. 45. MARK XII. 12.—]

MAT. XXI. 46. But—they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet: [and they left him, and went their way.] [MARK XII.—12. LUKE XX. —19.]

IMPROVEMENT.

WHEN we read this parable, and consider it as levelled at the Jews, we applaud the righteous judgment of God in revenging so severely upon them the *quarrel of his covenant*, and the *blood of his Son*; but let us take heed to ourselves, *lest we also fall after the same example of unbelief.* (Heb. iv. 11.)

Mat. xxi. 33. God has given to every man some part of *his vineyard* to cultivate and improve, or some advantages to know and serve him. And as for us who enjoy the Christian dispensation, we have particular reason to say, *the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places.* (Psal. xvi. 6.) *What could he have done more for* this part of *his vineyard?* How ungrateful therefore shall we be, and how mi-
34, 36 serable too, if we withhold *the fruits* he so reasonably expects; if we slight the *messengers* by whom he so frequently and so pathetically demands them; yea, if by wilful impenitence and
37, 39 unbelief we in effect renew the *slaughter* of *his beloved Son*, after that amazing favour he has done us, in charging him with an *embassy of peace* to us, whose aggravated crimes had long since
41 deserved that he should have sent among us the *messengers of his vengeance.* Oh that we may never be *condemned out of our own mouths* in the censures we pass on the guilty *Jews!*

43 We cannot surely think of the awful threatening of *our Lord* without some secret terror for ourselves, when we consider how shamefully we of this nation have abused our privileges. *The kingdom of God*, said he, *shall be taken from you, and given to a*

[1] *They perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.*] One would think they could be at no loss for the interpretation of it, considering how nearly it resembles that in Isa. v. 1—7, with which they were, no doubt, well acquainted. Only it is to be observed, that there Israel is *the vineyard*, here the *true religion* is represented under that figure; accordingly there it is threatened that *the vineyard* should *be destroyed*, but here that it should *be let out to other husbandmen*; each event suiting its connection.

nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. God had been just, had he long since executed such a judgment upon us: may he be merciful to us all in suspending and averting it! May his compassion particularly extend to those amongst us who reject *Christianity*: for the passage before us has a dreadful aspect upon such! Whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear; whether they will submit, or whether they will oppose; *Christ is made the Head of the corner*, and God will for ever establish him as such. Wo to them who, instead of joining with him, and fixing the stress of their souls upon him, deliberately set themselves to oppose his cause and interest! On such undoubtedly *will he fall* like a mighty rock of adamant, and miserably crush them in pieces, and *grind them to powder*.

SECT. CLII. Ver. 42 44

Thus did our Lord warn his enemes, most wisely, and most graciously; but they despised the admonition, and hated him for what was so kindly intended. *They sought to lay hands on him*, because *he had spoken this parable against them*. High provocation indeed, to set their danger faithfully before them, that if by any means it were possible they might be awakened to escape it! But, alas, what can save those whose spiritual distempers are exasperated by the most proper remedies prescribed for their cure!

Luke xx. 19

SECT. CLIII.

Christ farther warns the Jews of the danger which would attend their rejecting the gospel, or resting in an insincere profession of it, by the parable of the marriage-feast and the wedding garment. Mat. XXII. 1—14.

MAT. XXII. 1.

MAT. XXII. 1.
AND Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

AND when the priests and scribes were retired, *Jesus*, being still surrounded with the multitude, *answered and spake to them again in parables*, suited to the present circumstances of affairs, *saying*, *The kingdom of heaven*, or the dispensation of the gospel, *is like*, and may be well compared to that which happened in the case of *a man* [*that was*] *a king*,[a] *who made a* splendid *marriage-feast for his son*: *And*

SECT. CLIII. Mat. XXII. 1 2 3

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth

[a] *The kingdom of heaven is like a king.*] See note [i], on Luke vii. 32, Vol. I. p. 322.—It is observable, that Luke does not relate this parable here, because he had given us one very much like it before, which was spoken on a different occasion: (Luke xiv. 16—24, § cxx.) For the same reason he omits the question of the lawyer, Matt. xxii. 35; most of the discourse against the Pharisees, Matt. xxiii; and the parable of the talents, Matt. xxv. 14, *&c.*

SECT. CLIII. Mat. XXII.

when all was prepared, *he sent his servants to call those who had been* before *invited*, that they might come immediately *to the nuptial banquet.*[b] 3 *But they* were so rude and foolish, that they *would not come* upon the summons.

his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 *Again he sent other* of his *servants, saying*, Go and *tell them that were invited*, that I must insist upon their coming immediately; for *behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and* my other *fatted beasts are slain* and dressed,[c] *and all things are* just *ready* to be served up to the table; therefore *come to the marriage-feast* without any farther delay. *But* such was the perverseness of the guests, that, notwithstanding this repeated invitation, they refused to come; and, *not regarding* [*it*,] *they went away, one* of them *to his field* in the country, *and another to his merchandise* in the city. *And the rest* were so brutish that, *laying hold on his servants* who came with the message, they shamefully *insulted* them in a very outrageous manner, *and* even carried their ingratitude so far, that they *slew* some of *them*. *And when the king heard* [*of it*,] *he was* greatly *provoked; and*, not long after, *having sent his armies, he destroyed those murderers, and* even *burnt their city* where they dwelt,[d] which, being disaffected to him, had joined with those wicked men in concerting this gross and intolerable affront.

4 Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city.

8 In the mean time *then*, upon the king's receiving intelligence of their insolent behaviour, *he says to his servants, The marriage feast is pre-*

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but

[b] *To call those who had been invited to the nuptial banquet.*] The word γαμους here properly signifies *a nuptial banquet*, in which sense it is often used by other writers. (See Raphael. Annot. ex Polyb. p. 96, and Wolfius, in loc.) It was sometimes customary to send two messages, as in the case here supposed; which represented the condescension the greater, and suited the repeated invitations given to the Jews by Christ himself during his life, and by the apostles after his death.

[c] *My oxen and* my *fatted beasts are slain.*] It was agreeable to the simplicity of the ancient ages, to mention these as the chief parts of a royal entertainment. Thus in Homer, and other ancient writers, we see princes of the first rank and dignity feasting each other with nothing but the flesh of oxen, sheep, and swine.—Compare Isa. xxv. 6.

[d] *And*, not long after, *having sent his armies*, &c.] This clause must be supposed to come in by way of prolepsis or anticipation, for it is plain there could not be time, before the feast already prepared was served up, to attempt an execution of this kind.—This circumstance seems to point at the slaughter of the Jews, and the burning of Jerusalem and the other chief cities of their country by the Romans; who are here considered as the armies of their affronted prince, whose ambassadors they had indeed most cruelly and ungratefully murdered.

SECT. CLIII.

Mat. XXII. 9

they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye therefore into the high-ways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the high-ways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

pared: but they who were first *invited were not worthy* of any part in it, or indeed of any invitation to it: Yet let not the provisions I have made be lost: *go ye therefore to the* most *public ways*, and particularly to the places where several streets and roads meet,[e] *and invite as many as you find* there *to the wedding-banquet.* *And* 10 accordingly *those servants went out*, as their lord had commanded them, *into the* streets and other *[public] ways, and assembled all that they met with, whether bad or good*, without any regard to their characters or circumstances: *and the feast was abundantly supplied with guests.*

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding-garment:

But that, whatever habits they had on before, 11 they might appear worthy to sit at such a table, *the king* had ordered clean white garments to be delivered to each of them, and appointed servants whose province it was to see that they were decently dressed; after which, *coming in to view the guests*, he *saw a man there*, who, though such habits were provided, yet was *not clothed with a wedding-garment*;[f] but either in contempt of the feast, or presuming his own habit might do as well as that which was offered him, had refused to accept it.

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having

And he said 12 *to him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having* on *a wedding-garment* suited to the oc-

[e] *The* most *public ways*, &c.] The phrase διεξοδους των οδων, signifies *the ways* which were *most frequented*; which must be such as are mentioned in the paraphrase. (See Boisius Compar. in loc.) This intimates, that the Gentiles had as little reason to expect the call of the gospel, as common passengers and travellers to expect an invitation to a royal banquet.

[f] Who, though such habits were provided, yet was *not clothed with a wedding-garment.*] That persons making an entertainment sometimes furnished the habits in which the guests should appear, is evident from what Homer says of Ulysses, being thus furnished by the Phœacians (Odyss. lib. viii. ver. 402;) and from the account which Diodorus gives of the great hospitality of Gellias the Sicilian, who readily received all strangers, and at once supplied 500 horsemen with clothes, who by a violent storm were driven to take shelter with him: (Diod. Sic. lib. xiii. p. 375, Edit. Steph.) Now it was usual, more especially at marriage-feasts, for persons to appear in a sumptuous dress, adorned as some writers tell us, with florid embroidery; (Dr. Hammond, in loc.) though many times white garments seem to have been used on such occasions: (compare Rev. xix. 8, 9:) But as it could not be expected that travellers thus pressed in should themselves be provided with a suitable habit, we must therefore conclude, not only from the magnificence of the preparations, to which we must suppose the wardrobe of the prince corresponded, but likewise from the following circumstance of resentment against this guest, that a robe was offered, but refused by him. And this is a circumstance, which (as Calvin observes,) is admirably suited to the method of God's dealing with us; who indeed requires holiness in order to our receiving the benefits of the gospel, but is graciously pleased to work it in us by his Holy Spirit; and therefore may justly resent and punish our neglect of so great a favour.

SECT. CLIII.

Mat. XXII. 12

casion? Was it not offered to thee? or hadst thou so little sense of decency and gratitude as to refuse to accept it in compliance with the order of my feast? *And he was* presently *struck speechless*,[g] being confounded with the majesty of the royal presence, and conscious of his own insolence and folly.

a wedding-garment? And he was speechless.

13 *Then the king*, being justly incensed at so great an affront, resolved to punish it by a severe imprisonment: and therefore *said to* [*his*] *servants, Bind his hands and feet, and take him away* hence, from all the joy and splendour of the guest-chamber, *and cast him out into the darkness which is without*;[h] and *there*, instead of the mirth and delight of my banquet, there *shall be* nothing but *weeping and gnashing of the teeth* for anguish and despair. (Compare Mat. viii. 12, Vol. I. p. 309.)

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 Nor imagine, said our Lord in the conclusion and improvement of the parable, that this will be the case of one alone; *for* though it be a dreadful truth, yet I must say, that even the greatest part of those to whom the gospel is offered, will either openly reject or secretly disobey it; and while *many* indeed *are called* to the gospel-feast, it will be manifest, by their disregarding it, there are *but few chosen* in such a sense as finally to partake of its blessings. (Compare Mat. xx. 16, p. 238.)

14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

Thus did he strongly intimate to the Jews, that since they despised the rich provisions of his gospel-grace, incomparably more valuable than those of a royal feast, and since they used the messengers whom God had sent to them in so ungrateful and barbarous a manner, they must expect to be cut off and destroyed by those

[g] *He was struck speechless.*] I render it [*struck speechless,*] because the word εφιμωθη is in the passive form, and is very expressive. It is applied to the *muzzling of cattle*, 1 Cor. ix. 9. Compare 1 Tim. v. 18, and 1 Pet. ii. 15.

[h] *Cast him out into the darkness which is without.*] The mention of this circumstance in this connection would incline one to think, either that the word δειπνον (in ver. 4.) may signify *supper* as well as *dinner*, (which some critics have thought,) or that the king is represented as visiting the guests in the evening. But not to insist on this, which is of little moment, it is well known, that banquets of this kind were generally celebrated in rooms that were finely illuminated and richly adorned: (see note g, on Mat. viii. 12, Vol. I. p. 309.) And, considering how splendid and magnificent the entertainments of the eastern princes were, it cannot be thought an unnatural circumstance, that such an affront as this offered to the king, his son, his bride, and the rest of the company, should be punished with such bonds, and thrown into a dungeon.

hostile armies which Divine Providence would speedily bring upon them; but that the gospel should be embraced by the Gentiles, and vast numbers of them be converted and saved by it. And he farther intended to insinuate, by the circumstance of the wedding-garment, that as God had made provision in his gospel for the sanctification of mens hearts, and the reformation of their lives, he expected true holiness and cordial obedience from all who professed to embrace it; and would another day take a strict review of all its professors, that he might separate habitual sinners from the number and the blessings of his people, and deliver them over to perpetual darkness and misery.

SECT. CLIII. Mat. XXII. 14

IMPROVEMENT.

How rich are the provisions of the gospel! *a feast* indeed becoming the bounty and majesty of the *King* of heaven; and proportionable even to the love which he bears to his own *Son*, in honour of whom it is made! Mat. xxii. 2.

How wonderful is the grace which *calls us* to the participation of these provisions; *us*, who were originally *sinners of the Gentiles, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise!* (Eph ii. 12.) Yet he has graciously *sent his messengers to us*, and *invited us* to his house, yea, to *his table*, with the additional hope of yet nobler entertainments in reserve. May none of us *reject* so condescending *a call*, lest we turn *his goodness* into righteous indignation, and *treasure up to ourselves wrath against the day of wrath!* (Rom. ii. 5.) 9, 10 4—6

Let us also remember, that it is not every one who professes to accept the entertainment, not every one who talks of gospel-blessings, and seems to desire a share in them, that will be admitted to it. No: in order to our *partaking of an inheritance among the saints in light*, it is necessary that we be *made meet for it* by the holiness both of our hearts and lives. (Col. i. 12.) This is *the wedding-garment*, wrought by the *Spirit of God* himself, and offered to us by the freedom of his grace. And it is so necessary, that without it we must be *separated* from the number of his guests and friends, and even, though we had *eaten and drank in his presence*, must be *cast out into outer darkness.* (Luke xiii. 26.) 11 13

Frequently let us think of that awful day when *the King* will *come in to see his guests*; when God will take a most exact survey of every soul under a *Christian* profession. Let us think of that *speechless* confusion which will seize such as *have not on the wedding-garment*, and of that inexorable severity with which

SECT. CLIII. Verse 13 they will be consigned to *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* To have seen for a while the light of the gospel, and the fair beamings of an eternal hope, will add deeper and more sensible horror to those gloomy caverns; to have heard those *glad tidings of great joy,* and to hear them, as it were, echoed back in accents of *final despair,* how will it wound the ear, and pierce the very heart! May God prevent it, by *fulfilling in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in us, and we in him,* (2 Thess. i. 11, 12.) when the *marriage supper of the Lamb* shall be celebrated, and all the harmony, pomp, and beauty of heaven shall aid its solemnity, its magnificence, and its joy!

SECT. CLIV.

Our Lord confounds the Pharisees and Herodians when they hoped to have ensnared him by their questions relating to the lawfulness of paying the Roman tribute. Mat. XXII. 15—22; Mark XII. 13—17; Luke XX. 20—26.

MAT. XXII. 15.

SECT. CLIV. Mat. XXII. 15 *THEN the Pharisees,* stung with the severe but just rebukes he had been giving them in the foregoing parables, *went* out from his presence, *and* retiring, *took counsel* together *how they might ensnare him in* [*his*] *discourse,* and find something on which they might ground an accusation or complaint against him. Luke XX. 20. *And they* narrowly *watched him* in all his motions that day, *and sent out spies to* try if they could take *him* at an advantage, *who should pretend themselves to be righteous men,* that were come for the ease of their consciences, to propose a scruple to him on an affair of great importance. Now those that were sent on this errand were persons of opposite sects; [*even*] *some* of the *disciples of* the leading men among *the Pharisees,* who were very solicitous for the freedom of their country from every mark of slavery; *and* [*some*] of the sect *of the Herodians,* a party of men, (as was before observed) peculiarly attached to the family of Herod, and consequently zealous in the interest of the Roman government, which was the main support of the dignity and royalty of that family. (See note[f] on Mark iii. 6, Vol. I. p. 287.) And these, different as their principles were,

MAT. XXII. 15. THEN went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

LUKE XX. 20. And they watched *him,* and sent forth [unto him] spies, which should feign themselves just men, [MARK, *even* certain [disciples] of the Pharisees and of the He-

rodians], that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. [MAT. XXII. 16.—MARK XII. 13.]

21 And [MARK, when they were come] they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou [art true, and] sayest and teachest rightly [neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men], [MARK, but teachest the way of God in truth]: [MAT. XXII. —16. MARK XII. 14.—]

MAT. XXII. 17. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful [LUKE,

combined together in an attempt upon Jesus, *that* if an opportunity offered, *they might lay hold on his words*,[a] either to render him obnoxious to the people as an enemy to their liberties, or *to deliver him up* as a seditious person *to the power and authority of* Pontius Pilate, who was then *the* Roman *Governor* of that province. SECT. CLIV. LUKE XX. 20

And when they were come to him, in order to accomplish their design, *they* craftily accosted him with an air of great respect, and with flattering expressions of the highest esteem; and *asked him, saying, Master, we know*, and are well satisfied, *that thou art true* and upright; *and* as thou comest as a Messenger from God, so, after the example of those faithful and courageous prophets who were in Israel in its better ages, thou *sayest and teachest rightly*, and art impartial and sincere in every thing that thou declarest; *neither carest thou for* the censure or applause of *any man; for thou regardest not the person of men*, so as to be influenced by complaisance or fear, or any private views whatever, to deviate from the strictest integrity and veracity; *but* plainly *teachest the way of God* and the path of duty *in truth*. We are come *therefore* to propose a question to thee, about which thou knowest that we Pharisees and Herodians are divided, and to which an interested man who was governed by principles of human policy might, perhaps, be unwilling to answer: *tell us*, we pray thee (for we have determined to submit our judgment and practice to thy sentiments in the matter), *What thinkest thou? Is it lawful for us* Jews, who are the peculiar people of God, and are many of us in conscience tender of acknowledging any king but him, or 21 MAT. XXII 17.

[a] *That they might lay hold on his words.*] They hoped to have ensnared him by the question they came to propose, whatever answer he could have returned. If he asserted on the one hand, that tribute was to be paid to Cæsar, the Pharisees, who generally maintained, (as Judas Gaulonites had done), that such a subjection to a foreign power was inconsistent with the privileges of God's peculiar people, would have endeavoured to expose him to popular resentment, as betraying the liberties of his country. On the other hand, had he denied the lawfulness of this tribute, the Herodians would have had a very plausible pretence of accusing him to the Roman power, as a seditious person, which his persecutors had afterwards the assurance to do; Luke xxiii. 2, sect. clxxxvi. (Compare Acts xvii. 7.) Nay, perhaps, the very circumstance of taking upon him to determine such a question might, by these invidious inquirers, be construed as a pretence to sovereignty. See Voss. Harmon. Evang. p. 54, 55.

SECT. CLIV.

Mark XII. 15.

one of our brethren appointed by his immediate delegation, [b] *to pay* the usual *tribute to Cæsar*, the Roman emperor, *or not?* What dost thou advise in this case, as right for us to do? *Shall we give* it to the collectors, *or shall we not give* it? We must beg an immediate answer, for the tribute is even now demanded of us. And here they ceased, as thinking they had him in an inextricable snare, and that he could return no answer which would not expose him to the severe resentment either of the Jewish people or of the Roman officers.

for us] to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? [MARK XII.—14. LUKE XX. 22.]

MARK XII. 15.—Shall we give, or shall we not give?—

But Jesus, knowing their hypocrisy, which was indeed their reigning character, *perceived their craftiness* [*and*] *wickedness* in this address, however pious and respectful it appeared, *and* therefore *said to them, Ye hypocrites, Why do ye tempt me* by such an ensnaring question, and seek to draw me into danger and destruction by it? Is this a proof of your regard and friendship to a faithful and impartial Teacher? But

Mat. XXII. 19

that I may return a proper answer to your question, whatever be the view that you may have in asking it, *shew me the tribute money* which is demanded of you; and *bring me* hither *a penny*, or a denarius, *that I may see it.*

Mark XII. 16.

And they brought him a Roman *penny. And*, looking upon it, *he says to them, Whose is this image* which is struck upon the coin, *and* whose *inscription* and title is this [*which*] *it has* round it? [c] *And they*, without perceiving his design, immediately *answered and said to him*, It is *Cæsar's*: thereby in effect acknowledging that they were under his dominion, by their admitting his coin as current among them.

17 *And Jesus answering said unto them, Render therefore to Cæsar the things*

— But [Jesus], knowing their hypocrisy [LUKE, perceived their craftiness], [*and* wickedness, and] said unto them, Why tempt ye me [ye hypocrites]? [MAT. XXII. 18. LUKE XX. 23.]

MAT. XXII. 19. —Shew me the tribute money: [Bring me a penny, that I may see *it.*] [MARK XII.—15. LUKE XX. 24.—]

MARK XII. 16. And they brought [unto him a penny]. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription [LUKE, *that* it hath]? And they [LUKE, answered and] said unto him, Cæsar's [MAT. XXII. 19. — 21.—LUKE XX.—24.]

17 And Jesus answering said unto them, Render [there-

[b] One of our brethren, &c.] We are told that the grand argument which the followers of Judas Gaulonites, and others inclined to their party, urged, as decisive against the authority of the Romans, was that text which prohibited their *setting a stranger to be king over them*, Deut. xvii. 15. And Grotius (in his Note on Mat. xxii. 16.) seems to think it was this that formerly engaged them so vigorously to oppose the Chaldeans, and to refuse submitting to their government, till Jerusalem was destroyed. See note [a] on Luke xiii. 1, p. 126.

[c] *Whose is this image and inscription?*] Dr. Lightfoot tells us (in his Hor. Heb. on Mat. xxii. 20.) that the Jews have a tradition among them, that to admit of the title of any prince on their current coin, was an acknowledgment of subjection to him. It is certain, their not daring to refuse this coin, when offered them in payment, was in effect a confession, that they were conquered by the Romans, and consequently that the emperor had a right to their tribute.

fore] to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. [Mat. XXII.—21. Luke XX. 25.]

which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's;[d] and labour so to adjust your regards and duties to both, that you may not on the one hand, under pretence of religion, do any injury to Cæsar, nor on the other hand, under pretence of duty to Cæsar, violate any of the commands of God, or fail of that respect to him which he requires: whereby he plainly intimated, that tribute was to be paid to Cæsar as due to his government; yet did it in such a manner, and with such restrictions, as prevented the inconvenience of a more express declaration.

SECT. CLIV. Mark XII. 17

Luke XX. 26. And [when they had heard *these words*,] they could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace [and left him, and went their way.] [Mat. XXII. 22. Mark XII.—17.]

And when they had heard [*his*] wise and unexceptionable [*answer*,] *they* plainly found that they *could not take hold of his words before the people*, so as to incense and stir them up against him, as no friend to their liberties; *and* they were equally unable to accuse him to the Romans of sedition, on account of any thing he had then said as derogating from the rights of Cæsar. *They* therefore *wondered at* the prudence and address of *his reply*, by which he had effectually disentangled himself from what they thought must unavoidably have ensnared him; *and* were so perfectly confounded, that they *held their peace, and left him; and* deeply sensible of the disgrace, as well as disappointment they had met with, they *went away* amazed and ashamed.

Luke XX. 26

IMPROVEMENT.

AGAIN does our Lord renew the repeated lesson he had before given us, both by precept and example, of uniting *wisdom* and *innocence*. How admirable was this mixture of prudence and integrity with which he confounded these *Pharisees* and *Herodians*, who, contrary as their principles and interests were, conspired against him! *For of a truth*, O Lord, *against thine holy Child Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the people of Israel, were gathered together!* (Acts. iv. 27.) and their *words*

Luke XX. 25, 26

20

[d] *And to God the things which are God's.*] Diodate, Raphelius, and some other commentators, interpret this as a caution against omitting the sacred tribute, on pretence of answering the demands of Cæsar, who (they say) had claimed it to himself. But I apprehend our Lord had a more extensive view; and that as he cautions the Pharisees against using religion as a pretence to justify sedition, so he also warns the Herodians, that they should not, as they were too inclinable to do, make a compliment of their religion to the Romans, by complying with those things which were forbidden by the Divine law, that they might ingratiate themselves with Cæsar's party. See Prideaux's Connection, Vol. II. p. 366—368.

SECT. CLV.

were softer than oil, when *war* and murder *was in their heart*. (Psal. lv. 21.)

Ver. 21. Let us not, with *the simple*, *believe every* flattering *word*, (Prov. xiv. 15.) since sometimes the highest *encomiums* may be designed as the instruments of mischief: and too often they prove so when they are not treacherously intended.

Mat. XXII. 16 Our Lord was indeed the Person whom these artful *hypocrites* described; and was in that respect an excellent pattern to all his followers, and especially to his *ministers*. He *knew no man* in the discharge of his office: but, without *regarding the persons of any*, neither seeking their favour, nor fearing their resentment, he *taught the way of God in truth*, and *declared the whole of his counsel*.

Let us particularly attend to his decision in the present case, and learn with the utmost readiness to *render unto Cæsar, the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's*. Our civil magistrates, by virtue of their office, justly claim our reverent regard; and *tribute* is most reasonably *due* to those who *attend continually* to the service of the public, and are, under God, the pillars of our common tranquillity and happiness. (Rom. xiii. 6, 7.) Let that *tribute* therefore be justly and freely *rendered* with honour, and with cheerfulness; as he is surely unworthy to share in the benefits of government who will not contribute his part towards its necessary expence. But let it also be remembered, that the *rights of God* are sacred and inviolable: he, and he alone, is the Lord of conscience; and when that is invaded, it is easy to *judge whether man or God* is to be *obeyed*. (Acts iv. 19.) Let us be daily thankful, that in our own age and country *these rights* are so happily united. May a guardian Providence continue to watch over both! and may we seriously consider how impossible it is, under such a government, to be *good Christians*, without being *obedient subjects*, or to *fear God*, if we do not *honour the king* (1 Pet. ii. 17.)

SECT. CLV.

Our Lord proves the resurrection to the Sadducees, and answers their foolish objection against it. Mat. XXII. 23—33; Mark XII. 18—27; Luke XX. 27—40.

LUKE XX. 27.

THEN on that day in which our Lord had thus confounded the Pharisees and the Herodians, *some of the Sadducees came to him, who* (as it was before observed) were a set of pretended free-thinkers among the Jews, that *deny there*

LUKE XX. 27. THEN [the same day] came to him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that

there is any resurrection; and they asked him,[Mat. XXII, 23. Mark XII. 18.]

28 Saying, Master, Moses [said *and*] wrote unto us, If any man's brother die [Mark, and leave his wife behind him, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Mat. XXII. 24. Mark XII. 19.]

Mat. XXII. 25. Now there were with us seven brethren; and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and having no [Luke, children], left his wife unto his brother. [Mark XII. 20. Luke XX. 29.]

Luke XX. 30. And the second took her to wife, and he [likewise] died childless. [Mat. XXII. 26.—Mark XII. 21.—]

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also [Mark, had her]: And they left no children, and died [Mat XXII.—26. Mark XII.—21, 22.]

32 [And] last of all the woman died

is any resurrection of the dead,[a] or any future state in which the soul exists after death[b] to receive the reward of its actions. And they applied themselves to Jesus, *and asked him* a question, in which they put a case which they used often to urge against those who were of a different opinion from themselves, and with which they also hoped to puzzle him: *Saying, Master,* 28 if there be, as we know thou teachest, a resurrection of the dead, how can this difficulty which we are going to propose be adjusted? *Moses,* as thou well knowest, *said,* [*and*] *wrote to us* this precept, (Deut. xxv. 5.) *That if a man's brother die, and leave a wife and no children behind him, his* surviving *brother should take his wife, and raise up seed to his brother;*" the first child of this second marriage being esteemed the child of the deceased, so as to inherit his whole estate and bear up his name. *Now* it so happened, that *there were with us,* in a certain family in our neighbourhood, *seven brethren; and the first* of these brethren *when he had married a wife, died* quickly after, *and having had no children, left his wife* of course to be married *to his brother. And* upon this, *the second* followed the direction of the law, and *took her to wife; and he likewise,* after he had been some time married, *died childless,* as his elder brother did. *And* then *the third took her,* and he also 31 died as the others had done, without issue: *and in like manner also* all the rest went on, till every one of *the seven* brothers *had* married *her; and they* all *died, and left no children* behind them. *And last of all, the woman* herself *also died* without any issue, not having married into any other 32

SECT. CLV.

(Luke XX. 27.

Mat. XXII. 25

Luke XX. 30

[a] *Who deny there is any resurrection.*] It is generally known, that their master Sadoc, from whom the Sadducees took their name, taught that God was not to be served from mercenary principles, that is, (as he crudely explained it), from hope of reward, or fear of punishment. His followers interpreted this as an implicit denial of a future state, and so imbibed that pernicious notion of the utter destruction of the soul at death, equally uncomfortable and absurd. See Drusius, in loc.—The story which they mention here, seems to have been a kind of common-place objection, as we meet with it in the old Jewish writers, see Lightfoot Hor. Heb. in loc.

[b] Or any future state, *&c.*] As it is expressly said, Acts xxiii. 8. that they *denied any spirit,* and consequently the existence of the soul in a separate state; so our Lord's answer here and much of St. Paul's reasoning in 1 Cor. xv. goes on the supposition of such a denial on their part, See 2 Mac. xii. 42—44, where the author proves, that Judas believed a resurrection, from his offering sacrifices for the souls of the slain.

SECT. CLV.

family but this. The question *therefore* is, *When they shall rise*, as you say they all will, *in the* general *resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for all the seven had her to wife:* and as they stood in an equal relation to her in this world, they all seem to have exactly an equal claim to her in the next.

Luke XX. 33

Mat. XXII. 29

Thus they attempted in a sneering manner to overthrow all the arguments for a future state, which might be advanced either from reason, or from scripture. *And Jesus* therefore *answered and said to them*, it plainly appears from your manner of stating the question, that *you are* greatly *mistaken*, and go entirely on a wrong supposition; *not knowing*, on the one hand, what is so plainly intimated in *the scriptures* of a resurrection, which, if well understood, implies no contradiction at all; *nor* attending, on the other hand, to *the power of God*, which is able with infinite ease to effect what to man seems most difficult and improbable.

Luke XX. 34

And as to this particular difficulty which you now object, it ought to be considered, that *the children of this world* do indeed *marry, and are given in marriage*, according to the wise provision which God has made by that institution, for repairing the wastes of mortality by the pro-
35 duction of new generations. *But they who shall be counted worthy to obtain that* blessed *world* which God has prepared for his people above, *and* to be admitted to the never-fading honours that will succeed *the resurrection* of good men *from the dead*, will be in very different circumstances *when they shall rise*, and *neither marry,*
36 *nor are given in marriage: For they can die no more*, and therefore the rise of new generations is no longer necessary; *since* in this respect *they are equal to the angels of God in heaven*, [c]

also. [Mat. XXII. 27. Mark XII.—29.]

33 Therefore in the resurrection [Mark, when they shall rise], whose wife shall she be of the seven]? for [all] [Mark, the] seven had her to wife. [Mat. XXII. 28. Mark XII. 23.]

Mat. XXII. 29. [And] Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. (Mark XXII. 24. Luke XX. 34.—)

Luke XX.—34. The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead [Mark, when they shall rise,] neither marry, nor are given in marriage, [Mat. XXII. 30.—Mark XII. 25.—]

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels [of God in heaven], and

[c] *Are equal to the angels of God in heaven.*] Matthew and Mark say only that they are *as the angels* [ὡς ἄγγελοι], and though Luke expresses it by a stronger word (ἰσαγγελοι), that they are *equal to the angels*, yet all arguments drawn from hence, as proving an entire equality of glorified saints with angels in all respects, must be apparently weak and inconclusive. It is indeed the glorious scheme of redeeming love, to incorporate angels and saints into one happy society under Christ as their common Head; (Eph. i. 10.) but there are subordinations in united societies. And if the fall of the apostate spirits occasioned any thing like a vacancy in the celestial hierarchy, it would seem most probable, it might be filled up from heavenly spirits of an inferior order, who might be preferred to

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are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. [MAT. XXII. —30. MARK XII. —25.]

and are the children of God, and heirs of immortality and glory, *being the children of the resurrection*,[d] which shall instate them in a complete felicity, answerable to so near a relation to the Divine Being: and consequently all such difficulties as you have now been urging are entirely superseded by the happiness and perfection of so exalted a state. Luke XX. 36.

37 [But as touching the resurrection,] that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: [MARK, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him [that which was spoken unto you by God,] saying, I

37 *But as for* the evidence of *the resurrection* in general, not to insist on many plainer passages in the other books of scripture, for which you do not profess so great a regard,[e] I may say, that *even Moses* in effect *shewed that the dead are* to be *raised, when* speaking of what happened *at the* burning *bush*, (Exod. iii. 6.) *he calls the Lord*, from whom he there received his commission, "*the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*" And he had the highest authority for the expression; for *have ye not read in the book of Moses, how God spake to him in the bush* by this title? and have ye not observed *what was* then in effect *spoken to you by God, saying* in express

the rank their degenerate brethren lost, as a reward for their approved fidelity to God. But it becomes us to be exceeding modest in our conjectures on such subjects as these, lest we incur the censure of *intruding into things which we have not seen*, Col. ii. 18.

[d] *And are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*] This plainly intimates, that good men are called God's children, with a view to the inheritance to which they are adopted, on the final possession of which they enter at the resurrection. Compare Rom. viii. 17; Gal. iv. 7; 1 John iii. 2; and Rom. viii. 29. See the Essay on Divine Dispensations, p. 8, 9.

[e] Other books of scripture, for which you do not profess so great a regard.] The Sadducees are thought by many to have agreed with the Samaritans in rejecting all the other parts of holy scripture but the five books of Moses; which is particularly contended for by Serrarius. (Tribæres, lib. ii. cap. 21. and Minerval. lib. iv. cap. 14.) But this is questioned by Drusius, (de tribus sectis, lib. iii. cap. 9.) and Reland, (Antiq. Heb. part ii. cap. 11.) and Scaliger maintains the contrary, and shews that the passage from Josephus, (Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 10, (al. 18.) § 6.) which is commonly alledged in defence of that opinion, only relates to their rejecting all traditions. (Elench. Tribæres. cap. 16.) And indeed, as it appears from the Talmud that other parts of the Old Testament were often quoted by the Sadducees, and arguments were brought from thence against them by the Pharisees to prove the resurrection, which they endeavoured only to evade, without disputing the authority of texts, though they were not taken from the law of Moses, it is more reasonable to believe with Dr. Lightfoot, (in his Hor. Hebr. on John iv. 25.) that they did not reject the other books of the Old Testament, but only gave a great preference to the five books of Moses; and, laying it down as a principle, to receive nothing as an article of faith, which could not be proved from the law, if any thing was urged from other parts of scripture that could not be deduced from Moses, they would explain it in some other way. And this might be sufficient to induce our Lord to bring his argument to prove the resurrection from what Moses had said and to confirm it by that part of scripture which was most regarded by the Sadducees, and upon which they now had grounded their objection to it.

SECT. CLV. Luke XX. 38.

terms, "*I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?*" Now certainly *God is not* to be called *the God* of them who are entirely destroyed, and left to continue in the state *of the dead, but the God of* those who may be yet considered as *the living*: nor would he ever own the high relation of a God to those whom he finally abandons, and suffers to sink into nothing; much less would what he did for the holy patriarchs, whose names he commemorated with so much honour, answer such a title, since he left them exposed to so many trials and calamities, which multitudes escape of whom he has never spoken in such language: *so that* those good men must be considered as still in existence; and therefore it may be concluded, by a strong train of consequences that *all* the faithful *live unto him*;[g] for he, on the foot of Abraham's covenant, owns himself the God of all such: and consequently he must be an everlasting patron and friend to them, even to their whole persons, so as to re-

[am] the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?] [MAT. XXII. 31, 32.—MARK XII. 26.]

38 For [God is not a God of the dead, but [MARK, the God] of the living; for all live unto him:] [MARK, Ye therefore do greatly err.] [MAT. XXII.—32. MARK XII.—27.]

I am the God of Abraham, &c.] It is surprising to me to find learned men so much divided in their sentiments on this easy text. The force of the argument cannot surely rest on the word [*am*;] because though it be in the Greek, it is not in the Hebrew, where the words may possibly signify, *I* [*have been*] *the God of Abraham*, &c. and the possibility of such a version would affect the conclusion on that supposition. But our Lord's argument is equally forcible either way; for it is evident, that it cannot properly be said, that God either actually is, or hath been, the God of any whom he has suffered finally to perish: and, (as the apostle strongly intimates) he would, humanly speaking, be ashamed, or think it infinitely beneath him, to own that relation to any for whom he had not provided a city, or a state of more permanent happiness than any which could be enjoyed in this mortal life. (See Heb. xi. 16.) So that the argument by no means turns (as Archbishop Tillotson and Grotius suppose,) on the calamitous circumstances in which these patriarchs often were; but would have held good, had all their lives been as prosperous and glorious as that of Abraham seems generally, notwithstanding his peregrinations, to have been.—I cannot, as some modern writers of note do, fall in with Mr. Mede's notion, (in his Works, p. 801, 802.) that our Lord refers to the necessity of Abraham's being raised from the dead to inherit Canaan, in order to the accomplishment of God's promise to give it to him; both because I can see no such necessity, and because then I think it would have been much more to our Lord's purpose to have quoted the promise of the land of Canaan, than these general words.

[g] *So that all* the faithful *live unto him.*] It is evident that γαρ must here have the force of an illative particle, and may be rendered [*therefore,*] or [*so that*;] for what it introduces is plainly the main proposition to be proved, and not an argument for what immediately went before. In this connection the consequence is apparently just; for as all the faithful are the children of Abraham, and the Divine promise of being *a God to him and his seed* is entailed upon them, it will prove their continued existence and happiness in a future state, as much as Abraham's. And as the body, as well as the soul, makes an essential part of man, it will prove both his resurrection and theirs, and entirely overthrow the whole Sadducean doctrine on this head.

cover their mortal part from the ruin and desolation of the grave. And *therefore*, on the whole, *you greatly err*, in denying this doctrine; and your error tends to bring a disgrace on the whole series of Divine revelation, and to weaken one of the strongest motives to a life of holiness and obedience. SECT. CLV. Luke XX. 38.

39 Then certain of the scribes answering said, Master, thou hast well said.

Then some of the scribes who were present, being of the sect of the Pharisees, were pleased to hear a doctrine of their own so judiciously defended, and *said in reply, Master, thou hast spoken* so *well* upon this subject, that nothing solid can be objected to thy discourse. 39

MAT. XXII. 33. And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

And indeed *when* all *the multitude* that was present in the temple at the time, *heard* [*this*] unthought of, yet convincing argument, together with so clear an answer to a cavil in which the Sadducees used to triumph as invincible, *they were* greatly *astonished at his doctrine*, and plainly testified the admiration and delight with which they had attended his discourse. Mat. XXII. 33.

LUKE XX. 40. And after that, they durst not ask him any question at all

And as the Sadducees had nothing to reply, they were ashamed and disappointed; *and after that they durst not* any more presume to *ask him anything at all*,[h] but retired in silence and confusion. Luke XX. 40.

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH what satisfaction should we read this vindication of so important an article of our faith and hope! Easily was this boasted argument of the *Sadducees* unravelled and exposed, and all the pride of those bold wits, who valued themselves so much on that imaginary penetration which laid men almost on a level with brutes, covered with just confusion. Indeed, objections against the *resurrection*, much more plausible than this of theirs, may be answered in that one saying of our Lord's, *Ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God.* Were the *scripture doctrine* of the *resurrection* considered on the one hand, and the *omnipotence* of the *Creator* on the other, it could not seem *incredible* to any, *that God should raise the dead* (Acts xxvi. 8.) Mat. xxii. 23—28. 29

How sublime an idea does our Lord give us of the happiness of those who shall be *thought worthy* to attain it! *They shall be equal to the angels!* Adored be the riches of that grace which redeems us from this degenerate and miserable state, in which we had made ourselves so much *like the beasts that perish*, Luke xx. 35, 36.

[h] *After that they durst not ask him any thing at all.*] It is evident that this, is meant of the Sadducees, and must be understood as limited to them; because in the very next section we read of a question which one of the scribes put to him.

SECT. CLV. (Psal. xlix. 12.) to raise us to so high a dignity, and [martial us with the armies of heaven!

Ver. 34. Let us esteem so glorious a hope aright, and with the greatest intenseness of soul pursue and insure it. And as for those enjoyments of this present world, which are suited only to the mortality and imperfection of it, let us moderate our regards to them, and cultivate those higher entertainments with the most solicitous care, which will be transplanted into the paradise of God, and ever flourish for the delight of his *immortal children.*

37 Christ, we see, argues a very important point of doctrine from *premises*, in which, perhaps, we might not have been able to have discovered it without such a hint. Let us learn to judge of *scripture-arguments*, not merely by the sound, but by the sense of the words. And as our Lord chose a passage from the *Pentateuch*, rather than from the *prophets* for the conviction of the *Sadducees*, let us be engaged to study the tempers, and even the prejudices of those with whom we converse; that we may, if possible, let in the light of divine truth on their hearts, on that side by which they seem most capable of receiving it.

Mark xii. 26. In a word, let us with pleasure think of the blessed God under that gracious title by which he manifested himself to *Moses at the bush.* Still he is *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; the God* of our pious ancestors, the *God* Luke xx. 38. of all our departed friends who are now *sleeping in Jesus:* for *all* their souls now *live unto him*, and their bodies shall ere long be awakened by him. In like manner, if *we* are *followers of them who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises*, when we are *gathered to our fathers*, and our names, perhaps, forgotten among succeeding generations, he will still be *our God.* He will shew us, by the blessed experience of eternity, that when he treated with us by that title, and admitted us into the covenant by which he bears it, he intended for us something far nobler and better than the transient scenes of earth and of time could admit.

SECT. CLVI.

Christ discourses of the first and great command of the law, and confounds the Pharisees with a question relating to David's calling the Messiah his Lord. Mat XXII. 34, *to the end.* Mark XII. 28—37. Luke XX. 41—44.

MAT. XXII. 34.

MAT. XXII. 34. BUT when the Pha-

THUS Jesus defended the great doctrine of the resurrection from the vain cavils which were brought against it. *But* the debates of the day ended not here; for *when the Pharisees*

risees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

heard that he had thus *silenced* and confounded *the Sadducees, they were* soon *gathered together* again, with a malicious view of carrying on the same design, to try if they could any way expose him to the people, and to make their remarks upon what he might say.

SECT. CLVI. Mat. XXII. 34

35 Then one [of the scribes,] *which was* a lawyer, [came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well,] asked [him] a question, tempting him, and saying, [MARK XII. 28.—]

And one of the learned *scribes,* [*who was*] also *a doctor of the law, came* with the rest; *and having* attended to the discourse between Jesus and the Sadducees, and *heard them reasoning together, perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him a* farther *question;* intending *to make* another *trial of him* as to his understanding in the sacred books; *and said* to him, *Master,* I 36 desire thou wouldst inform me *which is the first* [*and*] *great commandment of all* that are contained *in the* whole *law?*[a] Is it a ceremonial, or a moral precept, that is the most important, and deserves the preference?

35

36 Master, which [is] the [first *and*] great commandment [of all] in the law? [MARK XII.—28.]

MARK XII. 29. And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; [MAT. XXII. 37.—]

And Jesus answered him, The question thou hast put may easily be resolved; for *surely the first,* that is, the most comprehensive and important *of all the commandments* of the law, [*is*] that which is contained in Deut. vi 4, 5; x. 12; "*Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is* the *one* great and only *Lord: And* upon all occasions *thou shalt* regard and honour him as such, and *love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength;*" that is, thou shalt consecrate to him all the united powers and faculties of thy nature; and thy understanding and will, thine affections and executive powers, shall be all in the most vigorous manner employed in his service. (See note [c] on Luke x. 27, sect. cvii.) *This is the first and great commandment,* the principal and funda-

Mark XII. 29.

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first [and great] commandment. [MAT. XXII.—37, 38.]

30

[c] *Which is the first and great commandment,* &c.] This was a point that often was disputed by the Jewish doctors; some contending for the law of circumcision, others for that of sacrifices, and others for that of the phylacteries. And though it was a rule among them, that the law of the sabbath was to give place to that of circumcision, yet they were not agreed as to the rest, which was the principal and most important precept, only in general they were inclined to give the preference to the ceremonial part.—Dr. Lightfoot remarks (in his Hor. Heb. on Mark xii. 28.) that Christ answers the scribe out of a sentence which was written in the phylacteries; in which he avoided all occasion of offence, and plainly shewed (as the scribe afterwards observes, Mark xii 33.) that the observance of the moral law was more acceptable to God than all the sacrifices they could offer to him.

SECT. CLVI.

mental precept of the law, and there is no other which may not be considered in its degree as subordinate to this, and reducible to it. *And*

Mark XII. 31

the second, in its sublime and comprehensive nature, [*is*] much *like unto it*, as well as given by the same authority,[b] [*even*] *this* contained in Lev. xix. 18; "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour* "*as thyself:*" For all the duties you owe to your fellow-creatures may be reduced to this; and where this undissembled and generous principle of love is, the rest will easily and naturally follow. On the whole, therefore, *there is*

Mat. XXII. 40

no other commandment greater than these. And indeed I may say, that *all the law and the prophets depend upon these two commandments;* that is, it is the design of the whole revelation, in its different periods and circumstances, to promote that virtuous and holy temper which may be expressed by the love of God and our neighbour.

Mark XII. 32

And the scribe who had proposed the question with a design to try him, was struck with the solidity and spirit of his answer, and *said to him, Truly* thou deservest to be owned as a *Master* in Israel; for *thou hast spoken* to this important question excellently *well:*[c] *for there is* indeed *one God, and there is no other besides*

33 *him: And to love him*, as thou hast said, *with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength*, to consecrate all the intellectual and active powers of our whole nature to him; *and* for a man *to love* [*his*] *neighbour as himself*, from a sense of piety to God, as well as benevolence to man, *is* far *more* important *than all* the *burnt-offerings and sacrifices* which the greatest prince could present at his altar; nor could the most exact and pompous ritual observances be acceptable without such virtues and graces as these.

31 And the second is like [unto it,] *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: there is none other commandment greater than these. [MAT. XXII. 39.]

MAT. XXII. 40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

MARK XII. 32. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God, and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

[b] *The second is like unto it.*] By quoting this with the former, he sufficiently guarded against a foolish notion, which some say the Pharisees had, that the observation of one excellent precept of the law would excuse the transgression of many others. It is certain the Pharisees were ready to magnify duties of the first table, to the neglect of those of the second; on which account it was exceedingly proper to use such language as this.

[c] Excellently *well.*] It is in the original καλως, *beautifully*, or *finely*, which expresses his high satisfaction in the reply, much more strongly than the word *well.*

34—And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

SECT. CLVI. Mat. XXII. 34

And Jesus, seeing that he answered thus *wisely, said unto him*, It appears from these just sentiments of thine on this important head, that *thou art not far from the kingdom of God;* and such views of religion as these may be the happy means of preparing thee to receive the gospel in that fuller manifestation of it which is now approaching.

Mat. XXII. 41. [And] while the Pharisees were gathered together [while he taught in the temple], Jesus asked them, saying, How say the scribes, that Christ is the Son of David? [Mark XII. 35. Luke XX. 41.]

42 What think ye [of] Christ? whose Son is he? They say unto him, *The Son* of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David [himself,] in spirit [*or* by the Holy Ghost] [Luke, in the book of Psalms] call him Lord, saying, [Mark XII. 36—Luke XX. 42—]

44 The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right-hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? [Mark XII.—36.] [Luke XX. 42, 43.

45 If David [himself] then call him Lord, how is he [Luke, then] his Son?

And while the Pharisees were gathered together during this conference, expecting to have found an opportunity to ensnare him, *as he was* still *teaching* the people *in the temple, Jesus* turned to the scribes and doctors of the law who were present, and *asked them saying, How say the scribes* so commonly as they do, *that the Messiah is the Son of David?* Let me ask you of that profession who are now here, *What think ye concerning the Messiah* in this respect? *Whose Son is he? They say unto him* Nothing can be plainer than what thou representest as the general opinion; he is undoubtedly to be *[the Son] of David. He saith unto them, How then does David himself*, speaking *by the* inspiration of the *Holy Spirit, in the book of Psalms*, acknowledge him to be superior to himself, and *call him, Lord?* [d] for you cannot but know that there is a passage expressly to this purpose, (Psal. cx. 1.) which you readily allow to refer to the Messiah, in which you find David *saying*, "*The Lord said unto my Lord,* "*Sit thou on my right-hand* in exalted power "and glory, with all the majesty and honour "of a King, *till I make* all *thine enemies thy* "*footstool*, and cause thee to trample upon them "at pleasure." *If David himself therefore call him Lord*, and speak of him as his superior, as you see he doth, *how is he then his Son?* [e]

Mat. XXII. 41

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[d] *How then does David himself by the Holy Spirit*, &c.] Our Lord, we see, always takes it for granted in his arguments with the Jews, that the writers of the Old Testament were under such an extraordinary guidance of the Holy Sprit, as to express themselves with the strictest propriety on all occasions. (Compare John x. 35, sect. cxxxiv.) And I look on this as no contemptible argument for the inspiration of the New Testament; for we can never think the apostles of Christ to have been less assisted by the Divine Spirit in their writings, when they were in other respects so much more powerfully endowed with it.

[e] *If David himself therefore call him Lord, how is he then his Son?*] This implies both the existence of David in a future state, and the authority of the Messiah over that invisible world into which that prince was removed by death.

SECT. CLVI. Mat. XXII.

Now as the scribes and Pharisees were ignorant of the great doctrine of the divine nature of the Messiah, with respect to which, even before his incarnation, he was the Lord of David,
45 and of the whole church, they were quite confounded with the question. *And the* vast crowd of *common people* that was about him, *heard him*
46 *with* great *pleasure*. *And* all his adversaries were at such a loss, that *no man could answer him* so much as *a word; neither did any one presume, from that day forward, to ask him any more* such ensnaring *questions*[f] as those by which they had now contrived to assault, and, if possible, to confound him,

[And the common people heard him gladly.] MARK XII. 37. LUKE XX. 44.

46 And no man was able to answer him a word: neither durst any man (from that day forth) ask him any more questions [MARK XII. 34.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mark xii. 28

WHATEVER might be the design of the *scribe* in putting this *question to Christ* again, (which was in effect the same with what another had proposed before, Luke x. 25, sect. cvii.) we have reason to rejoice in the repetition of so important an *answer*. Oh that it might be inscribed on our hearts as with the point of a diamond!

29 *The first and great commandment* requires us, to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and mind, and strength*; and *the second, which is like unto it*, to *love our neighbour as ourselves*. But alas, what reason have we to complain of our own deficiency on both these heads! and how much *need of being taught again* even these *first principles of the oracles of God!* (Heb. v. 12.)

30 Can we say, with regard to *the first*, that the blessed God has the whole of our hearts? Is the utmost vigour of our faculties exerted in his service? Do we make him the end of all our actions, of all our wishes, of all our pursuits?—Or are we indeed
31 such equitable judges between ourselves and others, as *the second* of these *great commandments* would require; so as to seek our own particular interests no farther than they may be subservient

Else, how great a Monarch soever the Messiah might have been, he could not have been properly called David's Lord, any more than Julius Cæsar could have been called the Lord of Romulus, because he reigned in Rome 700 years after his death, and vastly extended the bounds of that empire which Romulus founded. ——Munster's Note on this text shews, in a very forcible manner, the wretched expedients of some modern Jews to evade the force of that interpretation of the cxth Psalm which refers it to the Messiah.

[f] *I presume from that day forward to ask him any more questions.*] The plain meaning is, they asked him no more such captious questions; for the memory of this confusion impressed their minds during the short remainder of Christ's continuance among them; and he was soon removed from them, so that they had no farther opportunities of doing it when that impression wore off.

to, or at least consistent with, the good of the whole? Do we make all those allowances for others, which we expect or desire, they should make for us?—Surely we must own we are far from having *yet attained*, or from being *already perfect*. (Phil. iii. 12.) —But if this be not in the main, the prevailing and governing temper of our minds, in vain are our *burnt-offerings* and our *sacrifices*; in vain are all the solemnities of public worship, or the forms of domestic and secret devotion; and by all our most pathetic expressions of duty to God, and friendship to men, we do but add one degree of guilt to another. Let us then most earnestly entreat, that God would have mercy upon us, and by his Holy Spirit *write these laws in our hearts.* SECT. CLVI. Ver. 33

On these subjects let *scribes instructed to the kingdom of heaven* insist, lest they be condemned by *this expositor* of the *Jewish law.* And let those whose notions are thus *wisely* regulated, take heed, lest, while they seem *near to the kingdom of God*, by resting in mere notions, they come short of it, and sink into a ruin aggravated by their near approach to the confines of salvation and glory. 32 34

As for that *question* of *Christ* with which the *Pharisees* were perplexed, the gospel has given us a key to it. Well might *David, in spirit, call him Lord*, who *according to the flesh* was to descend from his loins: for *before David* or *Abraham was, he is.* (John viii. 58.) Let us adore this mysterious union of the *Divine* and *human natures* in the person of our glorious *Emmanuel*; and be very careful that we do not oppose him, if we would not be found *fighters against God.* Already is he *exalted at the right hand of the Father*; let his *friends* rejoice in his dignity and glory, and with pleasure wait the day of his complete triumph, when *all his enemies shall be put under his feet*, and even *the last* of them be *swallowed up in victory.* (1 Cor. xv. 25, 54.) Mat. xxii. 41—48 44

SECT. CLVII.

Christ discourses with the Pharisees in the temple, repeating the charges and cautions which he had formerly advanced at the house of one of that sect. Mat. XXIII. 1—22. Mark XII. 38—40. Luke XX. 45, *to the end.*

MAT. XXIII. 1.

THEN spake Jesus [in his doctrine,] [LUKE, in the audience of all the

MAT. XXIII. 1.

THEN Jesus, in the progress of *his doctrine* and discourse, *spake to his disciples in the audience of all the people* who were present, and took occasion (as he had done formerly, Luke xi. 39, & seq. sect. cx.) to expose and caution them against the pride and hypocrisy of the

SECT. CLVII. Mat. XXIII.

scribes and Pharisees, *Saying*, openly and freely to them, *The scribes and the Pharisees sit in the chair of Moses*,[a] and are the public teachers and expounders of his law: 2 *All therefore whatsoever they shall charge you to observe* in virtue of that law[b], pay a becoming deference and regard to, and be ready to *observe* 3 *and do* accordingly; *but practise not* by any means *according to their works; for they say* well in many instances, *but do not* themselves *practise* according to what they teach.

people, unto his disciples,] [MARK XII. 38.— LUKE XX. 45.]

2 Saying. The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

3 All therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.

Mark XII. 38. Mat XXIII.

I therefore repeat it again, *Beware* of imitating the hypocrisy, and following the example *of the scribes*;[c] *For* by virtue of the traditions which in conjunction with the Pharisees 4 they have added to the law, *they bind* together *grievous and insupportable burdens, and* without the least remorse *lay them on men's shoulders*, urging them by the heaviest penalties to conform to all their injunctions; *but they* dispense with [*themselves*] in the neglect of many of them, and *will not* so much as *move them with a finger of theirs*. (Compare Luke xi. 46, sect. cx.)

MARK. XII.—38. —Beware of the scribes; — [LUKE XX. 46.—]

MAT. XXIII. 4. For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 *And* even when they do conform in other in-

5 But all their

[a] *Sit in the chair of Moses.*] Some think here is an allusion to those pulpits which Ezra made for the expounders of the law; (Neh. viii. 4.) and which were afterwards continued in the synagogue, from whence the rabbies delivered their discourses sitting. It is probably called Moses' chair, because it was that from whence the books of Moses were read and explained; so that he seemed to dictate from thence. It is strange, that Lightfoot (Hor. Heb. in loc.) and Gussatus, should explain this of a legislative authority; since the scribes and Pharisees, as such, had no peculiar authority of that kind.

[b] In virtue of that law.] If this limitation be not supposed, this passage will be inconsistent with all those in which he condemns the doctrines of the scribes and Pharisees. Had he meant (as Orobio, and some Popish writers have unaccountably pretended) to assert their infallibility, and to require an absolute submission to their dictates, he must have condemned himself, as it was known he was rejected by them. See Limborch. Collat. Amic. p. 58, 194.

[c] *Beware of the scribes.*] The word scribe in general signifies any one conversant about books and writings; and is sometimes put for a civil officer, whose business probably resembled that of a *Secretary of state*: (2 Sam. viii. 17; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Kings xix. 2.) at other times it is used at large for a man of learning and ability; (1 Chron. xxvii. 32; Jer. xxxvi 26; Ezra vii. 6; Mat. xxiii. 34; 1 Cor. i. 20.) But as biblical learning was most esteemed among the Jews, the word in the New Testament seems to be chiefly appropriated to those that applied themselves to the study of the law; (perhaps including those whose business it was to transcribe it.) Of those the public professors, who read lectures upon it, were called doctors, or lawyers; and, probably, they who were invested with some public offices in the sanhedrim, or other courts, scribes of the people (Mat. ii. 4).—But that the scribes, as Trigland labours to prove, (de Secta Karæor. p. 68) were karaites, or textuaries, who rejected those traditions which the Pharisees inculcated, seems, from this text especially, utterly improbable. Our Lord commonly joins them with the Pharisees, and probably most of them were of that sect.

works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments.

stances to their own rules, it is generally from a bad principle; for there is none of *all their works* but what *they* chiefly *do* with a design *to be viewed* and taken notice of *by men*, as examples of extraordinary piety. For this purpose, in particular, *they make their phylacteries* remarkably *broad*,[d] that it may be thought they write more of the law on those scrolls of parchment than others do, or desire to be more frequently reminded of divine things by the size of them; *and*, for the same reason likewise, they *make the fringes* and tassels, which the law requires them to wear on the borders *of their garments*, as *large* as may be, that they may seem peculiarly desirous to remember the divine commandments, whenever they look upon them. (Compare Numb. xv. 38—40.)

SECT. CLVII. Mat. XXIII. 5

Luke XX.—46.—Which desire to walk in long robes;—[Mark XII.—38,—] Mat. XXIII. 6. And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the [Luke, highest] seats in the synagogues; [Mark XII. 39. Luke XX.—46.]

These are the self-conceited and vain-glorious men, *who affect to walk in long garments*, that they may appear with an air of distinguished gravity and stateliness; *And love the uppermost places at feasts*, where guests of the first quality are used to sit; *and* are ambitious to secure *the highest seats* even *in the* very *synagogues*,[e] where they should meet to prostrate themselves in the divine presence with the lowest abasement of soul: *And*, on the same principle of vain-glory and ostentation, they desire to receive *salutations in the markets*, and other places of common concourse, (compare Luke xi. 43, sect. cx.) *and to be called by men, Rabbi, rabbi*,[f] a title of honour which they are fond of

Luke XX. 46

Mat. XXIII. 6

7 And [salutations] in the markets, and to be called of

7

[d] *They make their phylacteries* remarkably *broad.*] I doubt not but most of my readers very well know, that the Jews, (understanding Exod. xiii. 9, 16; and Deut. vi. 8; xi. 18. which commanded them to *bind the law on their heads*, and to let it be *as frontlets between their eyes*, in a literal sense,) used to wear little scrolls of parchment, on which those passages were written, bound to their foreheads and wrists. It is generally supposed they were called phylacteries in Greek, as being looked upon as a kind of amulet to keep them from danger. See Serrar. Trihær, p. 38; and Drus. de tribus sectis, p. 263, 266.

[e] *The highest seats in the synagogues*] The doctors had seats by themselves, with their backs towards the pulpit in which the law was read, and their faces towards the people. These were accounted the most honourable, and therefore these ambitious scribes and Pharisees contended for them. See Reland. Antiq. Heb. p. 61; Vitring. de Synag. Vet. p. 191. & *seq*, and Wolf. in loc.

[f] *To be called by men, Rabbi, rabbi.*] Many learned men have observed, that an extravagant notion of respect went along with this title, which was derived from רבה, a word which signifies both *magnitude* and *multitude*, and seems intended very emphatically to express both the *greatness* and the *variety* of that learning, which they who bore it were supposed to be possessed of. (L'Enfant's Introd. p. 98.)—Dr. Lightfoot tells us (Hor. Heb. in loc.) that the words of the scribes are

SECT. CLVII. having repeated in every sentence, and almost at every word.

Mat. XXIII. 8 *But* as for you my disciples, *be not you called Rabbi*, nor value yourselves on the name, if it should ever happen to be given you; *for one is your Master*, [*even*] *Christ; and ye are all brethren*,[g] and as such should treat each other with 9 a loving freedom and familiarity. *And call not* [*any one*] *on earth your father*,[h] nor be fond of receiving this title from men, who may be ready to speak of themselves as but children in comparison of you, and implicitly to follow all your dictates; *for one is your Father*, and that of the whole family, [*even*] *he* who dwells *in* the highest *heaven*, and before whom all the most distinguished honours of the children of men disappear, as less than nothing and vanity. *Neither be ye called masters* and guides; *for one is your* great *Master* and Instructor, [*even*] *Christ*,[i] whose dictates you are ever to receive, and in whose name and authority alone you are to 11 teach others. *But*, on the contrary, *he that is*, and would appear in the eyes of God to be, the *greatest among you*, *shall be* most eminent for condescension and humility, and will be ready to wait on the rest, and to behave himself on all occasions as *your servant*. (Compare Mat. xx. 12 26, 27, p. 260.) *And* what I have often told you will assuredly be found to be a certain truth, That *whosoever shall* attempt in an ambitious way to

men, Rabbi, rabbi. MARK XII. — 38. LUKE XX.—46.—]

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever

declared to be more amiable and weighty than those of the prophets, and equal to those of the law: so that Gamaliel advised to get a rabbi, that one might no longer doubt of any thing. More passages to this purpose may be seen in Dr. Gale's Sermons, Vol. I. p. 80, and in Whitby and Elsner, *in loc.* They fully shew the necessity there was for such repeated cautions as our Lord gives, and are an abundant answer to what Orobio objects to our Lord's conduct in this respect; (see Limborch Collat. p. 119.) for, considering their inveterate prejudices against Christ, it could never be supposed that the common people would receive the gospel till such corrupt teachers as these were brought into a just disgrace.

[g] *Ye are all brethren.*] It is observable, that not one word is said of Peter's authority over the rest, either here, or on the application made by Zebedee's children; though had such an authority been intended, nothing could have been more natural, or necessary, than to have mentioned and adjusted it. Compare note [t] on Mat. xx. 26, p. 260.

[h] *Call not* [*any one*] *on earth your father.*] The Pharisees, no doubt, had this title given them; and Bishop Wilkins observes, that it is a title which assuming priests of all religions have greatly affected.

[i] *One is your Master* [*even*] *Christ.*] It is remarkable, that this occurs twice in the very same words (here, and in ver. 8.) Our Lord knew how requisite it would be to attend to it, and how ready even his ministers would be to forget it.

shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

exalt himself, shall sooner or later, by one method, or another *be abased; and whosoever*, on the other hand, *shall humble himself, shall be exalted* to the highest honour.[k]

SECT. CLVII. Mat. XXIII.

13 But wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

13 Then Jesus, turning from his disciples, to whom he had hitherto been speaking, addressed himself boldly to those crafty enemies who stood around him, waiting for nothing *but* an opportunity of mischief, and said, *Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!*[l] *for* by the prejudices you are so zealous to propagate among the people, *you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men*, and do all you can to prevent their regarding it; *for you neither go in yourselves, nor permit them that are* awakened to a desire of *entering, to go in;* and thus you make yourselves in some degree chargeable with their destruction as well as with your own, by the false notions you instil into their minds, and the prejudices you raise against me and my doctrine. (Compare Luke xi. 52, sect cx.)

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. [Mark XII. 40. Luke XX. 47.]

14 *Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites*, that impose upon men by specious forms of devotion! but these forms cannot impose upon God, nor prevent his vengeance from falling heavy upon you: *for*, by your cruel extortions *you devour the houses of widows* and orphans, whose helpless circumstances, if you had any remains of humanity and generosity, might rather engage you to protect and vindicate them; *and* it is only *for a pretence* to cover these crying immoralities, that you *make* such *long* and seemingly earnest *prayers*, hoping thereby to engage the esteem and confidence of others, that you may have the greater opportunity to injure and defraud them: but this complicated wickedness shall cost you dear; for *therefore shall you receive greater* and more dread-

[k] *Whosoever shall exalt himself*, &c.] Christ seems by the frequent repetition of this maxim to intimate, that he intended it, not only for those who were to be teachers of others, but for all his disciples without exception. And it is well worthy of our observation that no one sentence of our Lord's is so frequently repeated as this; which occurs at least ten times in the evangelists. Compare Mat. xviii. 4; xx. 26, 27; xxiii. 10, 11; Mark ix. 35; x. 43, 44; Luke xiv. 11; xviii. 14; xxii. 26; and John xiii. 14.

[l] *Hypocrites.*] Dr. More with great propriety observes, that the word *hypocrites* [ὑποκριται] in its most exact application, signifies *players*, who according to the unnatural custom of the ancients, acted a part under a mask. More's Theolog. Works, p. 293.

SECT. CLVII. Mat. XXIII.

ful *damnation*, than if you had never prayed at all, nor made any pretences to religion.

15 *Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites* as you are! *for* with indefatigable industry *you* do, as it were, *compass the sea and the land to make one proselyte* to your own particular sect and party; *and when he is become* [*so,*] *you* often *make him* even *doubly more a child of hell than* you *yourselves* are; while, in order to approve the sincerity of his conversion to you, he is obliged to vie with you in all the excesses of your superstition and bigotry.

15 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 *Wo unto you, ye blind guides,* who have invented so many nice distinctions, to make men easy in their sins, and subservient to your secular interests! *who say*, for instance, *Whosoever shall swear* only *by the temple, it is nothing;*[m] *but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple*, whether by that with which a part of it is overlaid, or by that which is laid up in its treasures, *he is obliged* by it. *Ye foolish and blind* [*creatures,*] is not the stupid sophistry of this distinction apparent to the weakest understanding? *for which* of these *is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold*, which without its relation to the temple would have nothing in it more sacred than any common metal? *And* ye also say, just with the same degree of sense and piety as before, *Whosoever shall swear* only *by the altar* of God, *it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gift which is upon it, he is obliged* to the performance of his oath. *Ye foolish and blind* [*wretches,*] what an idle and senseless distinction is this? *for which* can you suppose *is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift*, which, before it was brought thither, was only a common thing, and might be used to any of the ordinary purposes of human life? The truth of the case is *therefore* plain and obvious; *he that swears by the altar, swears* in effect *by it*,

16 Wo unto you, ye blind guides! which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple he is a debtor.

17 Ye fools, and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing: but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 Ye fools, and blind: for whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it and by all things thereon.

[m] *Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing.*] It seems the Pharisees taught, that oaths by the creatures might be used on trifling occasions, and violated without any great guilt, (see note[h] on Mat. v. 34, Vol. I. p. 222.) But they excepted oaths by the corban, and by sacrifices; in which it is plain that, without any regard to common sense or decency, they were influenced merely by a view to their own interest; and therefore represented these to the people as things of more eminent sanctity than even the temple or altar itself.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

and by all the *things* that are offered *upon it* to him whose altar it is: *And he that swears by the temple, swears by it, and by him* also *that dwells in it*, even the eternal and ever-blessed Jehovah, who honours it in a special manner with the tokens of his presence: *And he that swears by heaven*, which some of you are foolish enough to think a little oath, *swears by the throne of* the most high *God, and by him who sits upon it*, and fills all the train of attendant angels with the humblest reverence and prostration of mind. Now did you and your disciples consider this, that every oath by a creature is an implicit appeal to God, you could not surely talk of such expressions in so light and dangerous a manner as you commonly do.

SECT. CLVII. Mat. XXIII. 21 22

IMPROVEMENT.

As an ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear. (Prov. xxv. 12). *Christ* was indeed *a wise* and faithful *Reprover*; but the *ears* of these *Pharisees* were disobedient and *uncircumcised*. Let *us*, however, who are *his disciples*, attend to these instructions of our heavenly Master, and avoid every thing which has the remotest tendency to what he here condemns with so just a severity.

Mat. xxiii. 1, & *seq.*

Let not our zeal spend itself upon the *externals* of religion. 5
Let us not impose *heavy burdens* upon each other; nor lay 4
down rules for the conduct of others, by which we do not in like circumstances think fit to govern ourselves. Let us not impose our own *decisions* in a magisterial manner on our *fellow Christians*, nor affect to be *called fathers*, *masters*, and *teachers*; remembering that *Christ alone is our Master*, and 8—10
God our Father, and that it is a dangerous presumption and
folly to set ourselves in the place of either. Let us be upon 6, 7
our guard against that *vain ostentation* that would lead us to place any part of our happiness in *precedence*, and to value ourselves upon our *rank*, or upon any airy *titles of honour*, by 7
which, perhaps rather by accident than merit, we are distinguished from others; and which to a truly wise man, and especially to an humble follower of *Jesus*, will appear to be a very
little matter. Let us desire *that honour* which arises from con- 11, 12
descending to others, and serving them in love; *that honour* which springs from the *Divine approbation*, which it will be impossible to secure without unaffected piety. (John v. 44.)

God forbid that our *devotions* should ever be intended as a 14
cloak of maliciousness, or as the instrument of serving any mean and vile purpose! Such *prayers* would return in *curses* on our own heads, and draw down on them *aggravated damnation*. God 15

SECT. CLVII. Ver. 16. forbid that we should spend that time, and that ardency of spirit, in *making proselytes* to our own peculiar notions and party, which ought to be laid out in making them the *servants of God* through *Christ!* God forbid that we should delude ourselves or others by such idle *distinctions* in matters of conscience, as these which our blessed *Redeemer* has with so much reason and spirit exposed!

17—22 Let us retain the greatest reverence for an *oath*, and not accustom ourselves to *trifle* with any thing which looks like it. Let us consider *heaven as the throne of God*, and often think of the majesty and glory of that illustrious Being *that sits thereon*; for a sense of his continual presence will form us to a better temper, and engage us with a *righteousness* far *exceeding that of the scribes and Pharisees*, to walk before him *in all his commandments and ordinances blameless.*

SECT. CLVIII.

Christ continues his discourse with the Pharisees, reproving them for their hypocrisy, and threatening them with approaching judgments, Mat. XXIII. 23, *to the end.*

MAT. XXIII. 23.

SECT. CLVIII. Mat. XXIII. 23 OUR Lord farther proceeded in his discourse, and said, *Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!* you may justly expect the severest vengeance; *for ye* are careful to *tithe mint, and anise, and cummin,* and every other common herb which grows in your gardens; *and* yet *have* wholly *neglected the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and fidelity;*[a] *these* should chiefly have been regarded by you as what *ye ought* more especially *to have practised, and* indeed *not to have omitted the other,* as a reverent observance is due even to the least of God's commandments. (Compare Luke xi. 42, sect. cx.) 24 *Ye blind guides* of blind and wretched followers, *who* do (as it is proverbially said) carefully *strain out a gnat* from the liquor you are going to drink, *and* yet can

MAT. XXIII. 23. WO unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone.

24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a

[a] *Fidelity.*] The word πιστις has undoubtedly this signification in many places, (compare Tit. ii. 10; Gal. v. 22; and Rom. iii. 3). But there are many more in which it signifies *the confidence reposed in another;* and it is of great importance to observe this. See Col. i. 4; and 1 Pet. i. 21.

gnat, and swallow a camel.

swallow down a camel;[b] you affect to scruple little things, and disregard those of the greatest moment. SECT. CLVIII.

Mat. XXIII. 25

25 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup, and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, and are mighty exact in the observance of external rites and washings of the body; *but* are regardless of *the inner parts,* and unconcerned about your hearts and consciences, which *are full of* uncleanness, and of all kinds of *rapine and intemperance.* (Compare Luke xi. 39, sect. ex.)

26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Thou blind and senseless *Pharisee, first* begin with the heart, and thereby, as it were, *cleanse the inside of the cup and of the dish, that* thus *the outside of them may be clean also:* for the life will of course be reformed when the heart is purified.

27 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye resemble whited sepulchres, which indeed appear fair and *beautiful without,*[c] *but within are full of the bones of the dead, and of all* that *uncleanness* which arises from their putrefying bodies.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Even so you also do indeed outwardly appear righteous unto men, who view nothing more than the external part of your character; *but* in the sight of an heart-searching God, who has a clear and perfect view of all that lies *within, you are full of* that *hypocrisy and iniquity* which is infinitely more loathsome to him than the most disagreeable objects can be to the human eye.

29 Wo unto you, scribes and Phari-

Wo unto you, ye scribes and Pharisees, hypo-

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[b] *Strain out a gnat, and swallow down a camel.*] In those hot countries, as Serarius well observes (Trihæres, p. 51), gnats were apt to fall into wine, if it were not carefully covered; and passing the *liquor through a strainer, that no gnat, or part of one, might remain, grew into a proverb* for exactness about little matters.—Could any authority be produced in which κωνωπον signifies *a large insect,* I should with great pleasure follow the translation of 1727, in rendering the latter clause, *swallow a beetle.*

[c] *Whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful without.*] Though the first intention of whitening sepulchres might be only to mark them out, that they might be avoided; and so (as some Jewish writers, and particularly Maimonides, have observed) a heap of lime laid upon the grave might answer the end; it is evident they were sometimes adorned (ver. 29), probably not only with plastering and white-washing, but with marble and other stone monuments: and notwithstanding all the applause which Vitringa (Observ. Sacr. lib. i. p. 201) gives to the interpretation which Dr. Lightfoot (Hor. Heb. in loc.) and Dr. Pocock (Port. Mos. cap. v. p. 73) have advanced, I conclude that such ornaments were here referred to; for I cannot think Christ would have called these sepulchres beautiful, if they had been nothing but heaps of earth covered with grass. Compare note [e] on Luke xi. 44, sect. ex.

SECT. CLVIII. Mat. XXIII.

crites! for, under a pretence of your regard and veneration for their characters, *you* sumptuously *build* up *the sepulchres of the* ancient *prophets, and adorn the monuments of the* other *righteous* men of former generations, as desirous to preserve and honour their memories.[d] *And* ye *say, If we had been* living *in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the* holy *prophets* which they shed, but would have treated them in another manner than our fathers did. *So that you* really *bear witness to yourselves, that you are the sons of those that murdered the prophets;* and indeed your present temper and conduct more certainly speaks you to be their genuine offspring, and to be full of that very malignity which you pretend to condemn in them (Compare Luke xi. 47, 48. sect. cx.) *And do you [then] fill up*, as soon you think fit, what yet remains to be completed of *the measure of your fathers'* sins, that wrath may come upon this guilty land to the uttermost.

Ye painted and deceitful *serpents, ye brood of* specious, but venomous and mischievous *vipers*, how artfully soever you may evade human censures, *how can you* so much as hope by any of these vain pretences, to *escape* what is infinitely more dreadful, that righteous sentence of the unerring Judge, which will consign you over to *the damnation of hell?*[e] (Compare Mat. iii. 7, Vol. I. p. 103.)

Therefore,[f] *behold I send unto you prophets,*

sees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore be ye witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you

[d] *You build the sepulchres of the prophets*, &c.] I can by no means think, with Markius (Exercit. p. 229), many of whose criticisms are very low and fanciful, that Christ here blames the building the sepulchres of those holy men; which, as Elsner, (Vol. I. p. 160) and Raphelius (Annot. ex. Xen. p. 48) shew, was a piece of respect which most nations have paid to persons of distinguished merit, especially to those who fell in a good cause. What Vitringa (de Synag. p. 221) tells us of the extraordinary honours paid to the sepulchre of Mordecai, is an agreeable illustration of these words. Josephus also, from Nicolaus Damascenus, mentions Herod's repairing in a very splendid manner the sepulchre of David, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvi. cap. 7. (al. 11). § 1.) Compare Acts ii. 29.—Grotius is certainly right in saying, that the four verses in this paragraph are to be considered as one sentence; of which perhaps ver. 31 may be a parenthesis.

[e] *How can you* hope by any of those vain pretences to *escape* that sentence, &c.] Raphelius has abundantly proved that απεφυγον κριμα (which is the same sense with the original) properly signifies *to evade conviction* in a court of judicature, which is often done by the artifice of the criminal. Annot. ex. Xen. p. 50, 51.

[f] *Therefore.*] Though Olearius here would render διο τουτο *in the mean time*, the version is so unexampled that I cannot

prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

and wise men, and scribes instructed to the kingdom of heaven to try you once more, and to give you the last call to repentance and reformation which you must ever expect: but I know that this last attempt will, with regard to the generality of you, be entirely in vain; *and* that [*some*] *of them ye will kill, and* carry your malice so far as to *crucify* them like common slaves: *and* when ye cannot effect that, [*some*] *of them ye will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute* [*them*] *from city to city.* For thus will God in righteous judgment permit you to act, that ye may become the distinguished trophies of his displeasure, as if he were reckoning with you for the guilt of all former ages; so *that upon you may* seem to *come* the vengeance due for *all the righteous blood which has been poured forth on the earth* from the beginning of the world; even *from the blood of Abel, that* eminently *righteous man,* whom his brother Cain then slew, *to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah,* one of the last of the prophets, *whom ye murdered* while he was ministering *between the temple and the altar,*[s] impiously presuming to intrude into the

SECT. CLVIII. Mat. XXIII. 34

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

35

acquiesce in it; and if the connection, as it stands, could not be accounted for, I should think it better to connect this phrase with the close of the preceding verse: *How can ye escape the damnation of hell for this?* or avoid the judgment of God for this mixture of injustice, cruelty, and hypocrisy?

[s] *To the blood of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah,* &c.] Though very learned men have interpreted this of four different persons, I do not, with the learned and candid Witsius (Miscel. Vol. I. p. 269,) think it an inexplicable difficulty which of these is referred to. I scruple not with Grotius, Drusius, Casaubon, Erasmus, and many more, to explain it of that Zechariah who is expressly said to have been slain in that remarkable manner between the temple and the altar, (2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21.) though I take not upon me to determine whether (as Chrysostom asserts) Jehoiada his father was also called Barachiah, which signifies *one that blesses the Lord,* as Jehoiada does *one that confesses him*; or whether the original reading was different from ours, as Jerom says he found in the gospel of the Nazarenes, or the Hebrew version of Matthew.—It is by no means necessary, with Capellus, to allow that it was a slip in the evangelist's memory; but much more decent to suppose it an officious addition of some early transcriber, who might confound this martyr with Zechariah, one of the twelve minor prophets, who was indeed the son of Barachiah, but who does not by any means appear to have been murdered; nor is there any reason to imagine the Jews, so soon after their return from captivity, would have attempted so flagitious an act.—Though Theophylact understands the text of Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, on the credit of an idle tale of Origen's, confuted by Jerom, in which he tells us that this good man was murdered in the temple, (see Erasmus, in loc.) he has had few followers; and indeed the story seems to have been made on the mistaken authority of the text in question.—Yet after all, it seems still more unreasonable, with Archbishop Tillotson (Vol. I. p. 197, 198.) to understand these words as a prophecy of that Zechariah, the son of Baruch, who, as Josephus says, (Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 5, (al. v. 1.) § 4.) was assassinated in the middle of the temple, just before the Romans besieged the city. Had we more evidence of his being a righteous man, it would

SECT. CLVIII. Mat. XXIII.

court of the priests, to perpetrate that most horrible murder as near as possible to God's most immediate presence. *Verily I say unto you,* That even the guilt of all this righteous blood, 36 and *all these things* that are included in the woes I have denounced, *shall come on this generation* of men; so dreadful are the calamities which God will shortly bring upon it. (Compare Luke xi. 49, 50, 51, § cx.)

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

37 *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,* [*thou*] *that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee* by God for thy conversion and salvation; thou unhappy city, who hast so often been stained with the blood of the martyrs, that it is grown into a proverb, That a prophet can hardly perish any where else, (Luke xiii. 33.) *how often would I have gathered thy children together,* unto me, *even* with as much tenderness *as a hen gathereth her chickens together under her wings,* to protect them from the assaults of any bird of prey, or whatever else might threaten their safety, *and yet ye would not* hearken to my compassionate calls, but have hardened your hearts against my love, and repaid me with contempt, hatred, and 38 persecution? *Behold,* the time is coming when you will see your folly, though too late: for *your* sacred *house,* in which you vainly trust, even this magnificent temple in which you now stand, *is* so near being utterly destroyed, that it may be said to be even already *left desolate to you,* so that the few who survive the general carnage, shall be forced to sit down and weep 39 over its ruins. *For* I am now making my last visit here, and *I say unto you,* That *henceforth,* since you treat me so ill, *ye shall not see me* any more, *till* even *ye shall say,* as the multitudes lately did, but with sublimer passions and nobler views, *Blessed* [*is*] *he that cometh in the name of the Lord;*[h] that is, till your calamities

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

be harsh to suppose Christ in such a connection to speak of a future fact as what was already done; or to charge that deed on the whole Jewish nation which was done, contrary to the decree of the sanhedrim, by two resolute villains. All the martyrs from Abel to Zechariah, seems to have been a proverb; and it might naturally arise from observing that Abel was the first, and Zechariah in Chronicles the last eminently good man, of whose murder the scripture speaks.

[h] *Till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh,* &c.] This was doubtless spoken after Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem, (though Heinsius most unnaturally supposes it transplaced,) which shews the necessity of giving the words some such turn as they have in the paraphrase. —If we might be allowed, with Grotius,

have taught you eagerly to wish for the Messiah, and divine grace shall have inclined you, as a nation, gladly to receive me under that character; but you little think through what scenes of desolation, exile, and misery, you must pass for succeeding ages, before that happy time comes. (Compare Luke xiii. 34, 35, p. 138, 139.) And when he had thus spoken, he went out of the temple. SECT. CLVIII. Mat. XXIII. 39

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY we ever remember, how necessary it is, that our *righteousness* should *exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees*, if we desire to *enter into the kingdom of heaven!* (Mat. v. 20.) May our zeal be employed on the great *essentials* of religion, *justice*, *mercy*, and *fidelity*, and not be laid out merely or chiefly on the *circumstantials* of it! Mat. XXIII. 23

May we be concerned about the *purity of our hearts*, and not merely attend to the decency of our *external behaviour!* May we be, not like *painted sepulchres*, fair and *beautiful without*, and *full of all uncleanness within*; but rather like the *vessel* laid up before the Lord, whose *outside* shone with polished *gold*, while *within* it was replenished with heavenly *manna!* (Heb. ix. 4.) 25, 26 27, 28

How many, like these *Pharisees*, condemn *persecution*, and yet themselves are chargeable with the guilt of it! May that never be our character, lest we be *judged out of our own mouths*, and lest we thereby *fill up the measure of our iniquities!* 29—32

Behold the repeated tenderness of our compassionate *Redeemer*, even towards that guilty *city that killed the prophets, and stoned the messengers of God!* He *would* with the gentlest and most solicitous care *have gathered them, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings!* Thus does he still call and invite perishing sinners. Oh that the *obstinacy* of their own perverse and rebellious *wills* may not finally withstand all the overtures of his grace; lest eternal *desolation* be their portion, and they in vain *wish* for the repetition of those *calls* which they once so anxiously despised! 37—39

to translate ὡς ἂν εἴπητε, *till ye would be glad to say*, or *wish you had said, Blessed is he that cometh*, &c. this would give a very plain and easy sense, nearly parallel to Mat. xxvi. 64. where ἀπ' ἀρτι is perhaps used in the same sense. And thus the words might be explained, as if our Lord had said, "From the time of my present "appearance at this passover, you shall "not see me any more, till that awful "hour of judgment, in which I shall appear in such pomp and power, that the "proudest of you all shall have reason to "wish you had cordially joined in those "Hosannahs which you lately rebuked." This interpretation, could the version be justified, I should vastly prefer to any other.

SECT. CLIX.

Christ applauds the liberality of the poor widow whom he saw casting her two mites into the treasury. Mark XII. 41, *to the end.* Luke XXI. 1—4.

MARK XII. 41.

SECT. CLIX. Mark XII. 41

AND Jesus, having made an end of his discourse to the scribes and Pharisees, as he was going out of the temple, *sat down* at a little distance, *over-against* that part of it which was called *the treasury*,[a] because there the chests for collecting the contributions of the people stood, and in the chambers over that cloyster the sacred stores were kept; *and he looked up, and beheld*, with attentive observation, *how the people cast* their *money*, [*and*] brought *their* offerings and free *gifts, into the treasury*, at this public time; *and many rich men cast in much*; there being still this remainder of national goodness among them, though true religion was sunk to so very low an ebb.

MARK XII. 41. AND Jesus sat over-against the treasury: [and he looked up,] and beheld how the people cast money [*and* their gifts] into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. [LUKE XXI. 1.]

42 *And there came* among the rest *a certain poor widow*, whose character and circumstances he well knew; *and she cast in there two* of the smallest pieces of brass coin then in use, called *mites, which* both taken together only *make a farthing* of the Roman money.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in [thither] two mites, which make a farthing. [LUKE XXI. 2.]

43 *And* our Lord was so pleased with this generous action of hers, that *he* took particular notice of it, and even *called his disciples to him*, to hear his remarks upon it; *and* as they stood about him, he *says to them*, Look upon yonder woman, and observe the greatness of her piety and zeal; for *assuredly I say unto you, That this poor widow*, however she may seem to men to have given but a very little inconsiderable matter, *has* appeared in the sight of God to have *cast in more than all they who have thrown* such sumptuous gifts *into the treasury*:

43 And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury. [LUKE XXI. 3.]

44 And, in proportion to her circumstances, it is much more; *for all these*, who have pre-

44 For all [these]

[a] *The treasury.*] This treasury received the *voluntary contributions* of the worshippers who came up to the feasts; and the money thrown into it was employed to buy wood for the altar, salt and other necessaries, not provided for in any other way.

did cast in of their abundance unto the offerings of God:] but she of her [penury] did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living. [LUKE XXI. 4.]

sented such large sums, *threw in*, comparatively, but a little part out *of their* superfluity and *redundancy* of possessions *into the offerings of God: but she* in the midst *of her poverty*, and the daily straits to which she is exposed, *has cast in all* the little stock of money *that she had*, [*even*] *all* that she had by her for *her living;* not knowing where she should get the next mite for herself to furnish out the necessary supports for her humble and indigent life. SECT. CLIX. Mark XII. 41.

IMPROVEMENT.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ had *his eye* on those who were bringing *their gifts unto the* sacred *treasury*. Let us remember, *his eye* is also *upon us*, to observe in what degree we are ready, on proper occasions, to contribute for the glory of God, and the good of mankind; and in what proportion to the ability which God has given us. Let not the *poorest* be discouraged from doing something for these good purposes, however little they may have it in their power to perform; since Christ may acknowledge the noblest *charity* in the smallest gift, as *wherever there is a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not.* (2 Cor. viii. 12.) Mark xii. 42. 42

Let us imitate the candour of our blessed *Redeemer*, and be ready to be pleased with *little services*. The circumstances of mankind are such, that few have it in their power to do *great matters* frequently for the service of others: but *the desire of a man is his kindness*; (Prov. xix. 22.) the principles and circumstances of an action recommend it more than the appearance it may make; and a multiplicity of *little kind offices*, in persons frequently conversant with each other, are the bands of society and friendship. We ought therefore to preserve an habitual tenderness and generosity of mind, and be mutually willing to oblige, and to be obliged by them. 43

To conclude, let us *not despise the poor*, since there are many of them who will in *Christ*'s computation be found eminently *rich in good works*; many whose *mite* will, *in the treasury of God*, have the value of a *talent*, and will condemn the sordid parsimony with which many of the *rich* and great have *cast their presents into it;* while what the latter part with *out of their abundance*, bears no proportion in the account of God to what the former freely spare *from their necessity*. Happy is it for every truly pious and benevolent mind, that it is to give up its final account to him *who searches the heart*, and who is witness to those devout and charitable *purposes* which will always stretch themselves out beyond the limit of *actions*, and engage the cha- 44

ritable soul to wish more good, than the power and revenues even of kingdoms could effect.

SECT. CLX.

Our Lord foretels the approaching destruction of Jerusalem, and here insists on the remoter signs of its approach. Mat. XXIV. 1—14. Mark XIII. 1—13. Luke XXI. 5—19.

MAT. XXIV. 1.

SECT. CLX. Mat. XXIV.

AND when *Jesus* had thus confounded his adversaries, and had foretold the desolation that their aggravated sins would shortly bring both on the city and the temple, (Mat. xxiii. 38, p. 354.) he left the place, and *going out* from thence, *departed from the temple*, where he had been discoursing to them. *And* as he was going away, *his disciples came to* [*him*,] and took that occasion *to shew him the* splendid *buildings* and magnificent decorations *of the temple: and some* observing what a noble structure it was, and *speaking how it was adorned with beautiful stones*, of a prodigious size,[a] *and* with costly *gifts* which many persons, in accomplishment of their vows for deliverances received, had hung upon the walls and pillars of it, besides what was laid up in its treasuries;[b] *one of* [*them*] *says unto him, Master, behold what* vastly large and curious *stones, and what* stately *edifices* [*are these.*]

2 *And Jesus replying, said unto them,* [*As for*] *these things which ye behold* with so much admiration, *do you not see* the splendour and magni-

MAT. XXIV. 1.

AND Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple; [LUKE, and as some spake how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts,] [one of *them* saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings *are here.*] [MARK XIII. 1. LUKE XXI. 5.]

2 And Jesus [answering,] said unto them, [LUKE, *As for* these things which ye behold,] See ye

[a] *Beautiful stones* of a prodigious size.] Josephus says that some of them were forty-five cubits long, five high, and six broad: (Bel. Jud. lib. v. cap. 5. (al. vi. 6.) § 6.) See his large and beautiful description of the whole temple in that chapter, which is one of the most entertaining passages of such a kind I ever met with.

[b] Costly *gifts*, &c.] Hanging up such αναθηματα, or *consecrated gifts*, was common in most of the ancient temples.—Tacitus speaks of the immense opulence of the temple at Jerusalem; (Histor. lib. v. § 8.) Amongst others of its treasures, there was a golden table given by Pompey; and several golden vines, of exquisite workmanship, as well as immense size; (for Josephus tells us, in the chapter cited above, § 4, that they had clusters [ανδρομηκεις] as tall as a man;) which some have thought referred to God's representing the Jewish nation under the emblem of a vine; Isa. v. 1, 7; Psal. lxxx. 8; Ezek. xv. 2, 6.—And Josephus likewise asserts, (ibid. § 6.) that the marble of the temple was so white, that it appeared to one at a distance like a mountain of snow; and the gilding of several of its external parts, which he there mentions, must, especially when the sun shone upon it, render it a most splendid and beautiful spectacle.

SECT. CLX. Mat. XXIV. 2

not all these [great buildings?] Verily I say unto you, [Luke, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.] [Mark XIII. 2. Luke XXI. 6.]

cence of *all these great* and pompous *buildings*, which are the pride of the Jewish nation, and the wonder of all the rest of mankind? Yet notwithstanding all the present grandeur of this stately temple, *verily, I say unto you*, That *the days will* quickly *come, in which* a victorious enemy shall profane its sanctity, and deface its beauty, insomuch that *there shall not be left one* single *stone upon another here, that shall not be* entirely *demolished*,[c] till no remains of any part of it shall be preserved.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives [over-against the temple] the disciples [Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew] came unto him privately, saying, [Luke, Master,] tell when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world, [when all these things

3 *And* when he was retired from the city, *as he sat* down *upon the mount of Olives*, which was *over-against the temple*, and commanded the finest prospect of it from the east, *the disciples, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew*, who were favoured with a peculiar share of his intimacy and confidence, *came to him privately, saying, Master*, we entreat thee that thou wouldest *tell us when these* awful *things shall happen? and what* [*shall be*] *the sign of thy* second *coming*, when thou wilt execute thy vengeance on these thine enemies: *and of the end of the* present *age* and dispensation,[d] *when*

[c] *There shall not be left one stone upon another here*, &c.] It seemed exceedingly improbable, that this should happen in that age, considering the peace of the Jews with the Romans, and the strength of their citadel, which forced Titus himself to acknowledge that it was the singular hand of God which compelled them to relinquish fortifications which no human power could have conquered. (Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 16.) § 1.) (Compare note [b], on Luke xix. 43, p. 288.)—Bishop Chandler justly observes, that no impostor would have foretold an event so unlikely, and so disagreeable. Defence of Christianity, p. 472, 473.

[d] *The end of the* present *age.*] So συντελεια του αιωνος may well be rendered. Compare Mat. xiii. 39; Rom. xii. 2; 1 Cor. x. 11; Eph. ii. 2, 7; Heb. vi. 5; ix. 26; in all which places αιων may be rendered *age*.—Archbishop Tillotson, and many other excellent writers, would retain our translation and suppose here are two distinct questions; *What should be the sign of his coming* to punish the ungrateful inhabitants of Jerusalem? and *What the sign of his final appearance* to the universal judgment? And that Christ answers the first question in the former, and the second in the latter part of the chapter: though where the transition is made, has been, among those that embrace this interpretation, matter of much debate.—Others have supposed the apostles took it for granted, that the world was to be at an end when Jerusalem was destroyed; and that Christ was not solicitous to undeceive them as their error might make them so much the more watchful; and therefore answers in ambiguous terms, which might suit either of these events.—But it seems much more natural to conclude, that they expected the wicked persecutors of Christ, (in which number most of the magistrates and priests were,) would by some signal judgment be destroyed; and that hereupon he would erect a most illustrious kingdom, and probably a more magnificent temple, which they might think described in Ezekiel: an expectation which they did not entirely quit even to the day of his ascension. (See Acts i. 6.) Our Lord, with perfect integrity and consummate wisdom, gives them an account of the prognosticating and concomitant signs of the destruction of Jerusalem; and then, without saying one

SECT. CLX. Mat. XXIV.

all these things shall be accomplished, to make way for the brighter glories of that kingdom which thou wilt establish, when all thy sufferings are over, and every thing which opposes thy triumph subdued?

4 *And Jesus answering them, began to say*, with an air of solemnity agreeable to the importance of the subject on which he was going to discourse, as to the event concerning which you now inquire, let me in the first place caution you, that you *see* [*to it*] in the most solicitous manner, *that no man deceive you* with false pretences to a divine revelation and commission.

5 *For many shall come in my name*, and with the title peculiar to me, *saying, I am the Messiah*;[e] *and the time* of deliverance so long promised, and so long expected by the Jewish people, *is* now *come*[f] when the yoke is to be broken off from their neck, and their enemies are to be subdued under them; *and* by these plausible pretences they *shall deceive many*; but *do not ye therefore go after them*; for all their promises and hopes will be in vain, and sudden destruction will overtake them and their followers.

6 *But when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours*

shall be fulfilled?] [MARK XIII. 3, 4. LUKE XXI. 7.]

4 And Jesus [answering them, began to say,] Take heed that no man deceive you. [MARK XIII. 5. LUKE XXI. 8.—]

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; [LUKE, and the time draweth near:] and shall deceive many: [LUKE, go ye not therefore after them.] MARK XIII. 6. LUKE XXI.—8.]

6 [LUKE, But when] ye shall hear of wars, and rumours

word of any temporal kingdom to be erected, raises their thoughts to the final judgment, (to which the figures used in the former description might many of them be literally applied,) and sets before them an heavenly kingdom, and eternal life, as the great object of their pursuit, Mat. xxv. 34, 46.—This I take to be the key to this whole discourse; the particular parts of which have been admirably illustrated by many learned commentators; but the whole scope and connection of it, so far as I can recollect, fully explained by none.

[e] *Many shall come in my name*, &c.] See Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 13, (al. 12.) § 4, 5.—Christian writers have always with great reason represented Josephus's History of the Jewish War as the best commentary on this chapter; and many have justly remarked it as a wonderful instance of the care of Providence for the Christian Church, that he, an eye-witness, and, in these things of so great credit, should (especially in such an extraordinary manner) be preserved, to transmit to us a collection of important facts, which so exactly illustrate this noble prophecy in almost every circumstance. (Compare Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 8, al. 14.) But as it would swell my notes too much to enter into a particular detail of those circumstances, I must content myself with referring to Dr. Whitby's excellent notes on the xxivth of Matthew, and to Archbishop Tillotson's large and accurate discourse on the same subject, in the second Volume of his Posthumous Works. Ser. 183—187, p. 547, *& seq.*

[f] *The time is come.*] The word ηγγικεν may signify either the *approach* or *arrival* of the time, and may with great propriety express the *first opening* of a scene to be gradually disclosed; in which sense it is applied to Christ's kingdom, as preached by himself and his apostles, during the time of his personal ministry. —Such pretended Messiahs did indeed arise towards the close of the Jewish state. (See I John iv. 1; Acts v. 36, 37; and Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 8, (al. 6, 7,) § 6, 10.)—The Rhemish Jesuits, as much as they triumph in their infallible guide to the interpretation of scripture, ridiculously explain this as a prophecy of Luther and Calvin; which I mention only as one instance, among many more, of their contemptible ignorance, or wicked prevarication.

SECT. CLX.

of wars, [LUKE, and commotions,] see that ye be not troubled [LUKE, *and* terrified:] for all [LUKE, these things] must [LUKE, first] come to pass; but the end is not yet. [MARK XIII. 7. LUKE XXI. 9.]

of wars, among the Jews, *and seditions* raised by them in several places against the Romans, *see that you be not troubled* [*and*] *terrified*, as if the great event that I have now foretold would immediately happen; *for all these things must first come to pass*, and be the gradual openings of it; *but the end* of them, in the utter destruction of the Jewish state, *is not yet*: nay, some of you, my disciples will have several important services to perform here after these alarms are begun; services which even by means of these alarms you may pursue with some peculiar advantages. Mat. XXIV. 6

7 [LUKE, Then said he unto them,] Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and [LUKE, great] earthquakes in divers places, [and troubles:] [LUKE, and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.]—[MARK XIII. 8.—LUKE XXI. 10, 11.]

And *then he* further added, and *said to them*, Judea shall not be the only seat of war at that time: for in the neighbouring countries *nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*:[g] *and*, partly as the consequence of these ravages and slaughters, and partly by the immediate hand of providence on sinful men who have rejected the gospel, as also to exercise the faith and charity of its professors, *there shall be* severe *famines, and* mortal *pestilences; and* there shall also happen *great* and terrible *earthquakes in various places, and troubles* and anguish of mind in the apprehension of yet greater calamities. Here at home *there shall also be dreadful sights, and great signs from heaven*, particularly a comet like a flaming sword waving over Jerusalem, and the appearance of contending armies in the air.[h] 7

8 All these *are* the [beginnings] of sorrows. [MARK XIII. —8.]

But all these things [*are*] only *the beginnings of* those *sorrows* and alarms that will issue in the destruction of Jerusalem. 8

MARK XIII. 9. But take heed to yourselves:

But take ye *heed to yourselves*, and be cautious Mark XIII. 9

[g] *Nation shall rise up against nation*, &c.] Grotius gives us a particular account of several wars of the Jews among themselves, and of the Romans with the Syrians, Samaritans, and other neighbouring nations, before Jerusalem was destroyed.—There were also earthquakes at this time in Apemea, Laodicea and Campania: (see Tacit. Annal. lib. xii, § 43, 58; lib. xiv. § 27; lib. xv. § 22. Sueton. Nero, cap. 48; Galb. cap. 18.)—The famine in the days of Claudius is mentioned Acts xi. 28, as well as recorded in history; (Sueton. Claud. cap. 18, and Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. cap. 8;) and many perished by it in Judea. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 2. § 6.

[h] *Dreadful sights, and great signs from heaven*, &c.] Of these appearances, see Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 5. (al. vii. 12,) § 3, and Tacit. Histor. lib. v. § 13.—I cannot here but add an excellent observation of Mr. West relating to the authors by whom this prophecy, which is expressed in terms so very plain and circumstantial, is recorded; that Matthew and Mark were incontestibly dead before the event, as Luke also probably might be; and as for John, the only evangelist who survived it, it is remarkable that he says nothing of it, lest any should say the prophecy was forged after the event happened.—See West on the Resurrection of Christ, p. 393.

SECT. CLX.

how you behave; and though you meet with the severest persecutions, be not discouraged from persisting in the truth, and from continuing faithful in your regards to me: *for before all these things* shall happen, *they shall lay their* violent *hands upon you, and persecute you* with the greatest cruelty and rage; [*and*] *shall deliver* some of *you up to the* greater *councils*, [*and*] cite others of you *to* appear before the inferior courts in *the synagogues, and* shall cast some of you *into prisons, to be* severely *scourged*, [*and*] otherwise *afflicted* by confinement and a variety of hardships there;[1] *and* indeed they *shall* go so far as to *kill* some of *you*, in a few years. *and* as for the rest, *ye shall be* generally *hated*, not only by the Jews here at home, but by those abroad, and *by all* the Gentile *nations* to whom you go; [*and*] *shall be brought before rulers and kings for my name's sake*, and *for a testimony against them*, that the gospel has been offered to them in the most public manner, even to the greatest of men, to whom you might otherwise have had no access: (compare Mat. x. 17, 18, § lxxv.)

Mark XIII. 9

Luke XXI. 9

And it shall also *turn to you for a* public and honourable *testimony* of the innocence of your cause, however it may be misrepresented, and of the integrity and uprightness of your conduct.

Mark XIII. 10

And indeed, notwithstanding this early and violent opposition, yet before the destruction of Jerusalem *the gospel must first be preached among all* the heathen *nations*, which are subjected to the Roman empire, (see note [n];) and there also you will be followed with the like assaults and

11 persecutions. *But when they shall bring* you before governors and kings, *and deliver you up* to the officers of justice, to be prosecuted as criminals in their most solemn courts, *settle it* at such times *in your hearts* as a constant rule *not to* draw up any formal speech, nor to *premeditate what answer* or apology *you shall make*; [*and*] be *not* anxiously *solicitous before-hand what you shall speak* in your defence, to vindi-

selves: for [LUKE, before all these] they [LUKE, shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, *and*] shall deliver you up to councils, [LUKE, *and* to the synagogues, and into prisons,] [to be beaten [*and* afflicted, and shall kill you:] and ye [shall be hated of all nations, *and* shall be brought before rulers and kings for my [name's sake,] for a testimony against them. [MAT. XXIV. 9. LUKE XXI. 12.]

LUKE XXI 13. And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

MARK XIII. 10. And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, [settle *it* in your hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer; *and*] take no thought beforehand what ye shall

[1] *Shall deliver you up to the councils*, &c.] All this was exactly accomplished: for Peter and John were called before the sanhedrim (Acts iv. 6, 7;) James and Peter before Herod, (Acts xii. 2, 3;) and Paul before Nero the Emperor, as well as before the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, and Festus, (Acts xviii. 12; xxiv. xxv. xxviii.)

speak; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. [LUKE XXI. 14.]

cate yourselves and your religion from the unrighteous charges and aspersions of your enemies; *but whatsoever shall be given* in to *you*, and be strongly suggested to your minds *in that hour*, *that speak* boldly and resolutely; *for it is not you that speak, but the Holy Spirit* himself, who shall assist and dictate to you. (Compare Mat. x. 19, 20, sect. lxxv. and Luke xii. 11, 12, sect. cxi.) *For* it is really my cause in which you are engaged; and therefore, though you are ignorant and unlearned men, and so may be apprehensive you shall be confounded in the presence of persons who are in rank and education so much your superiors, yet depend upon it, that *I will give you a mouth* to plead, *and wisdom* to answer whatever they alledge against you, *which all your adversaries shall not be able to contradict or withstand*, but shall be even astonished at the freedom and propriety with which you shall express yourselves, according to the various occasions which arise. (Compare Acts iv. 13, 14.)

SECT. CLX. Mark XIII. 11 Luke XXI. 15

LUKE XXI. 15. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist.

MAT. XXIV. 10. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

And many that have owned themselves my followers *shall then be offended*, and give up all regard to the gospel, when they see the profession of it must cost them so dear; *and* having proved apostates, they shall become persecutors too, and *shall betray one another, and hate one another*, as being in their consciences secretly galled at the greater fidelity of their companions. *And* this wretched temper shall rise to such a height, as to break through all the bonds of nature, insomuch that *one brother shall betray another*, not only to imprisonment but *to death: and the father*, on the one hand shall betray [*his*] *own son; and children* on the other hand, *shall rise up* as witnesses *against* [*their*] aged *parents, and cause them to be put to death* without compassion or remorse. *And* these scenes, monstrous as they may seem, shall pass in your days, and before your eyes; nay, *you* yourselves shall have a painful share in them: For you, my apostles and servants, *shall be betrayed* and persecuted *even by parents, and brethren, and kindred, and* those that pretend to be the most faithful and affectionate *friends; and* [*some*] *of you shall they cause to be slain* by the hand of public and oppressive violence.

Mat. XXIV. 10.

MARK XIII. 12. Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

Mark XIII. 12

LUKE XXI. 16. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends: and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death.

Luke XXI. 16

SECT. CLX. Luke XXI. 17

And indeed this temper shall so generally prevail, that *ye shall be hated by* almost *all* ranks and orders, as well as nations of *men*, *for the sake of my name* and gospel,[k] though they can find nothing else to object to your character, or accuse in your conduct; and they shall treat you as public enemies, while you are acting the most generous and benevolent part. (Compare 18 Mat. x. 22, sect. lxxv.) *But* in the midst of all your sufferings be courageous and cheerful, as knowing you are the care of a peculiar and most gracious Providence; so that, on the whole, you shall be safe, and *not an hair of your head shall* utterly *perish*,[l] or fall to the ground 19 unregarded. *In your patience* therefore *possess ye your souls*,[m] and be calm and serene,

17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. [MARK XIII. 13.—]

18 But there shall not an hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

[k] *Ye shall be hated by all men for the sake of my name.*] That not only the apostles, but all the primitive Christians were in general more hated and persecuted than any other religious sect of men, is most notorious to all who are at all acquainted with ecclesiastical history. A fact, which might seem unaccountable, when we consider how inoffensive and benevolent their temper and conduct was, and how friendly an aspect their tenets had on the security of any government under which they lived. We are not to imagine, (as Mons. St. Real weakly insinuates, in his ill-digested, though elegant History of the Life of Jesus, p. 264.) that they had any peculiar aversion to the name of Christ. The learned Dr. Warburton has shewn, beyond all contradiction in his masterly manner, that the true reason of this opposition was, that while the different pagan religions, like the confederated demons honoured by them, sociably agreed with each other, the gospel taught Christians, not only like the Jews, to bear their testimony to the falsehood of them all, but also with the most fervent zeal to urge the renunciation of them, as a point of absolute necessity; requiring all men, on the most tremendous penalties, to believe in Christ, and in all things to submit themselves to his authority: see Dr. Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, Vol. I. book ii. § 6, p. 278—295. A demand which bore so hard especially on the pride and licentiousness of their princes, and the secular interests of their priests, that it is no wonder they raised so violent a storm against it; which, considering the character and prejudices of the populace, it must be very easy to do.

[l] *Not an hair of your head shall perish.*] Our Lord had foretold but just before, (ver. 16.) that several of them should be put to death; he must therefore here intend to assure them, that when they came on the whole to balance their accounts, they should find they had not been losers in any the least instance; but that whatever damage they had sustained, it should be amply made up, and they at length placed in a state of entire security. This is plainly the import of this proverbial expression. See 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; 1 Kings i. 52; and Acts xxvii. 34.

[m] *In your patience possess ye your souls.*] Though the word κλασθαι does often signify *to acquire* or *procure*, (see Mat. x. 9; Acts i. 18, viii. 20; xxii, 28.) yet I cannot suppose, with Brennius, that our Lord intends here chiefly to intimate, that fortitude and composure of spirit might have a tendency to secure their lives, as it would enable them calmly to deliberate on the several circumstances which might arise. I cannot but think, that the sense which the accurate and pious Dr. Wright gives of this passage, in that excellent piece of Christian Philosophy, his discourse on Self Possession, (p. 4, 5.) is much more natural, as well as more noble; as if our Lord had said, "By "keeping the government of your own "spirits in these awful scenes, which "will bear down so many others, you "will secure the most valuable self-enjoyment, as well as be able most prudently to guard against the danger "which will surround you."

the masters of yourselves, and above the agitation of any irrational or disquieting passion. SECT. CLX.

Mat. XXIV. 11. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

For though your discouragements are great, *and* particularly on this account, that as I (hinted before, ver. 5.) *many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many;* which some will urge as a farther excuse for suspecting and abusing you: *And,* though *because iniquity shall* thus *abound* under such a variety of forms, *the love of many* professing Christians, who should be your protectors and comforters, *will grow cool;* so that they shall be afraid or ashamed to entertain you, and shall be ready to throw up the cause which you so zealously defend: Yet sink not under the burden; *but* remember this, and let it animate you amidst all your difficulties, That *he who* resolutely *endures* all these extremities, and perseveres *to the end, shall* finally *be saved,* and have his life given him as a prey. (Compare Mat. x. 22.)

Mat. XXIV. 11

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

12

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. [MARK XIII.—13.]

13

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

And know, for your farther encouragement, that all their rage shall not be able to destroy the interest in which you are embarked, and to which you sacrifice so much; for I assure you, that *this* glorious *gospel of the kingdom* of heaven *shall* first *be preached in all the world, for a witness to all* its most distant *nations;*[n] *and then shall the end* of the Jewish state *come,* and God, having thus gathered for himself a people from among the Gentiles, shall destroy even this temple itself, in which they have trusted so much, and which they have foolishly looked upon as an inviolable pledge of his favour.

14

[n] *This gospel—shall be preached in all the world,* &c.] The accomplishment of this extraordinary prophecy is admirably illustrated by Dr. Arthur Young on Idolatry, Vol. II. p. 216—234. It appears, from the most credible records, that the gospel was preached in Idumea, Syria, and Mesopotamia, by Jude; in Egypt, Marmorica, Mauritania, and other parts of Africa, by Mark, Simon, and Jude; in Ethiopia, by Candace's eunuch, and Matthias; in Pontus, Galatia, and the neighbouring parts of Asia, by Peter; in the territories of the seven Asiatic churches, by John; in Parthia, by Matthew; in Scythia, by Philip and Andrew; in the northern and western parts of Asia, by Bartholomew; in Persia, by Simon and Jude; in Media, Carmania, and several eastern parts, by Thomas; through the vast tract from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum, by Paul, as also in Italy, and probably in Spain, Gaul, and Britain: in most of which places Christian churches were planted in less than thirty years after the death of Christ, which was before the destruction of Jerusalem.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CLX.

THE whole of this prophecy most evidently shews us how vain and dangerous it is to trust in external privileges, and to cry out, as these foolish and wretched Jews did, *The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these* buildings; when of this stately and magnificent structure, within less than half a century after it was finished, *not one stone was left on another* undemolished.

Mat. xxiv. 2.

So particular a prediction, when compared with the event, must surely confirm our faith in Christ, as the great Prophet which was to come into the world. And we shall see reason to admire the wisdom and goodness of Divine Providence in giving us, almost by a miraculous preservation of the author, such a commentary on this prophecy as is delivered down to us in the works of Josephus, the Jewish historian, which throw a much stronger light upon it, than if they had been written by a Christian on purpose to illustrate it.

Luke xxi. 10, 11 Mat. xiii. 12, 13

Let us bless God, that our own eyes have not seen such *desolations* and *ruins*, such *commotions* in the natural and moral world, such *dissensions* in civil life, such *persecutions* and *hatreds* amongst the nearest *relatives*, under the pretence of propagating *religion:* which, however propagated, is nothing without that *love* which is so often made the first victim to it.

Mat. xxiv. 12. 13

Yet too plainly do we see, in one form or another, *iniquity abounding, and the love of many waxing cold.* Let us endeavour to revive on our own hearts a deep and lasting impression of Divine things; and remember, whenever we are tempted to let go our integrity, that it is *he* alone *who endures to the end* that *shall be saved.*

Luke xxi. 14, 18 19

Whatever our trials are, let us cheerfully confide in the protection of Divine Providence; nor let us despair of those continued influences of the blessed Spirit which may animate us to the most difficult services, and support us under the most painful sufferings. Let us therefore *in patience possess our* own *souls*, and maintain that composure and steadiness of spirit, as those that know how much more valuable it is, than any enjoyment which can be taken away, or any temporal interest which can be brought into question.

SECT. CLXI.

Our Lord proceeds to describe the nearer prognostications of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the extreme severity of those calamities which should then fall on the Jewish nation. Mat. XXIV. 15—28. Mark XIII. 14—23. Luke XXI. 20—24.

LUKE XXI. 20.

SECT. CLXI. Luke XXI. 20

OUR Lord having proceeded thus far in his discourse, added some more immediate signs, by which the near approach of this terrible destruction might be determined; *and* said, *When you shall see Jerusalem encompassed* on every side *with* the Roman *armies*, [*and*] *the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet*, (Dan. ix. 27.) *standing where it ought not*, and displayed *in an holy place*; that is, when the standards of their desolating legions, on which they bear the detestable images, of their idols, are planted on holy ground:[a] *then know*, *that the desolation thereof is* just *approaching*. And by the way, now I mention that remarkable prophecy, *let every one that reads* it pause seriously upon it, that he may *understand* its meaning; for it contains one of the most eminent predictions which can any where be found, of the time, purposes, and consequences of my appearing; and the whole context is of great importance.[b] Now I say, when you see 21 this signal, *then let them that are in Judea flee*, as fast as they can, from the fortified cities and

LUKE XXI. 20. AND when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, [*and* the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet,] [MARK, standing where it ought not] [in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)] then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. [MAT. XXIV. 15. MARK XIII. 14.—]

21 Then let them which are in Judea

[a] Planted on holy ground.] Not only the temple, and the mountain on which it stood, but the whole city of Jerusalem, and several furlongs of land round about it, were accounted holy. (See note [s], on Mat. iv. 5, Vol. I. p. 118.)—It is remarkable, that by the special providence of God, after the Romans under Cestius Gallus made their first advance towards Jerusalem, they suddenly withdrew again, in a most unexpected, and indeed impolitic manner; at which Josephus testifies his surprise, since the city might then have been easily taken. By this means they gave as it were a signal to the Christians to retire; which, in regard to this admonition, they did, some to Pella, and others to mount Libanus, and thereby preserved their lives. See Jos. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 19, [al. 24.] § 7, and Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 5.—Of the idolatrous standards in the Roman armies, see Grotius's excellent note on Mat. xxiv. 15.

[b] The whole context is of great importance.] If any wonder that so important a prophecy is not more frequently insisted upon in the New Testament, I think we may justly answer, that it was not proper for the apostles to urge it; as the exact commencement and termination of the seventy weeks was a nice controversy out of their way, and not capable of being fully cleared up to the populace, with whom they were chiefly concerned; and as several of the events referred to in it had not their complete accomplishment, till some years after most of their writings were published. But that the period is long since elapsed is certain, however it might be reckoned; as Dr. Bullock has excellently shewn. See his Vindication, book ii. chap. 4, § 6; p. 216—218, and Dr. Sykes of Christianity, chap. xvi. p. 297—301.

SECT. CLXI.

populous towns, *to the mountains* and the wilderness, where they will be secure; *and* especially *let them that are in the midst of it,* where Jerusalem stands, *depart* immediately *out* of it, before their retreat is cut off by the union of the enemies' forces near that centre; *and let not them that are in the* adjacent *countries,* by any means attempt to *enter into it,* as a place of safety; for all its strength, and all its sanctity, will not secure its inhabitants. Let every one therefore retreat as fast as possible, *and let not him that is* taking the air *on the* battlements at the *top of the house, go down into the house, nor enter into it, to take away any thing,* though ever so precious, *out of his house;* but let him go down by the outer-stairs, as the shortest way, lest he should linger to his own destruction.

Luke XXI. 21

Mark xiii. 15

16 *And let not him that is* at work *in the field,* and hath laid aside his upper garment as an incumbrance, *go back,* so much as a few steps, *to take his clothes,*[c] lest the enemy should surprise him before he can recover them. (Compare Luke xvii. 31, p. 185.) In a word, let every one flee for his life, and reckon himself sufficiently happy if he can escape with it, though in the most naked and destitute circumstances: *for these are days of* most terrible *vengeance,* to which most of the threatenings of the prophets, even from the days of Moses, do ultimately refer; and they shall be so full of distress and misery, *that all* the most dreadful *things which are written* in them *may* then be said to *be* completely *fulfilled.*[d]

Luke xxi. 22

Mark xiii. 17

But more especially there will be *wo* and terror *to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days;* as their incumbrances

flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it, depart out; and let not them that are in the countries, enter thereinto. [MAT. XXIV. 16. MARK XIII.—14.]

MARK XIII. 15. And let him that is on the house-top, not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take any thing out of his house. [MAT. XXIV. 17.]

16 And let him that is in the field, not turn back again, for to take up his garment. [MAT. XXIV. 18.]

LUKE XXI. 22. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

MARK XIII. 17. But wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. [MAT. XXIV. 19. LUKE XXI. 23.—]

[c] *Go back to take his clothes.*] These are as strong expressions as one can imagine to urge the speediest retreat. It is indeed observable, that this whole discourse abounds with very lively figures of oratory, and is heightened with the noblest beauties of description. Were it necessary to produce authorities, to prove that husbandmen laid aside their upper-garment when at work, they might be found in Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 109, 110,) but that learned critic has impaired the beauty of the text, by interpreting it as a caution *not to go home* to fetch them. *Not to turn back,* implies fleeing directly without *going back* (as we speak in the country) *so much as a lands length* to take them up; and so it rises on the former verse.

[d] *May* then be said to *be* completely *fulfilled.*] Among many admirable things to be found in that great original, Dr Jackson's Credibility of the Scriptures, I cannot but reckon that part of it, in which he shews how exactly the prophecies of Moses were accomplished in the slaughter and dispersion of the Jews in, and quickly after this fatal war with the Romans. See the passages quoted below, in note[m], p. 372.

will be peculiarly great, and they that are with them will be driven in a wild consternation to consult their own safety, to the neglect of those whom common humanity might teach them to guard and assist. SECT. CLXI.

18 And pray, ye that your flight be not in the winter, [neither on the sabbath-day.] [Mat. xxiv. 20.]

And therefore *pray that* no additional circumstances of difficulty may attend you; as, for instance, that this *your* precipitate *flight may not be in winter*, when the roads are bad, and the days short and dark; *nor* fall out *on a sabbath-day*; for a short journey may not be sufficient, and the regard which most of the Christians in these parts will have for that day, may make them scrupulous of violating a rest they think so sacred, by a longer march, even in a case of so much extremity. Mark XIII. 18

19 For in those days [Luke, there shall be great [tribulation *and* [Luke, distress in the land, and wrath upon this people,[t] such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, [no, nor ever shall be.] [Mat. xxiv. 21. Luke xxi.—23.]

And a case of extremity it will indeed be; *for in those days there shall be* a scene of *great tribulation* [*and*] *distress in the land* of Judea, *and* of dreadful *wrath* from heaven *upon* all *this people*, *such as the like has not been* known before, either here or elsewhere, even *from the beginning of the creation which God has made unto this time*; *nor ever shall* the like *be* heard of any more;[s] as no people ever have been, or ever shall be, guilty of so aggravated a crime, and so inexcusable a series of impenitence and infidelity. 19

Luke XXI. 24. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trod-

And therefore *they shall fall by the edge of the sword* in multitudes, both within and without the city; *and* the consequence of all shall be, that the miserable remnant which survives the general carnage, *shall be carried* away *captive into all* the most distant *nations* of the world,[t] and continue for many ages under great infamy, calamity, and oppression. *And*, in the mean time, *Jerusalem* itself *shall be trampled* Luke xxi. 24

[s] *Such as the like has not been,—nor ever shall be.*] This Josephus expressly asserts to have been the fact; and whoever reads his account, or even that judicious abstract from him which Eusebius has given us, (Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 5, 6.) will see a sad illustration of all this; and, criminal and detestable as the Jewish nation now was, will hardly be able to forbear weeping over those complicated miseries brought upon them by plagues, and famine, and fires, occasioned by the siege, and by the carnage made, not only by the Romans, but by the yet greater cruelties of the seditious and zealots within the city, who really acted the part of so many incarnate fiends rather than of men.

[t] *They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be carried captive*, &c.] It appears from Josephus that eleven hundred thousand Jews were destroyed in this war, and near an hundred thousand taken prisoners, and (according to Deut. xxviii. 68.) sold for slaves at the vilest prices. See Joseph. Bel. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 17.) § 3.

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down and kept in possession *by the Gentiles*,[g] *till the times* appointed for these triumphs and insults *of the Gentiles* shall *be fulfilled*, and the day come when God shall remember his ancient people in mercy.[h]

den down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke XXI. 24

Mark XIII. 20

And during the wars which are to bring on this said catastrophe, *except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh could be saved;* the whole nation would be utterly exterminated from the earth, and the name of Israel no longer be had in remembrance:[i] *but for the elect's sake,*

MARK XIII. 20. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake,

[g] *Jerusalem shall be trampled down by the Gentiles.*] Their land was sold, and no Jew was allowed to inhabit there, (a rigour never used, that I know of, towards any other people conquered by the Romans:) nay, they might not come within sight of Jerusalem, or rather of Elia, the name given to the *new city*, which was built without the circuit of the former, when the foundations of the *old* were ploughed up. A heathen temple was afterwards built where that of God had stood; and a Turkish mosque pollutes it to this day: so remarkably was the hand of God upon them. And it is well known, by the testimony of a heathen writer, (who ridiculously ascribes it to the fatal resistance in the element,) that Julian's impious attempt to rebuild their temple, and settle them in Jerusalem again, in professed contempt of this prophecy, was several times miraculously defeated by the eruption of balls of fire, which consumed the workmen. See Ammian. Marcel. lib. xxiii. cap. 1. p. 286.

[h] *Till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*] It is much easier to vindicate the authority of the words καιροι εθνων from the objection of Dr. Mill. (Proleg. p. 133,) chiefly founded on their being omitted in the Cambridge Manuscript, than to determine the signification of them. I cannot suppose, with Messrs. Le Clerc and L'Enfant, that by the accomplishment of the times of the Gentiles we are to understand the time when Constantine put an end to the Gentile idolatry in Jerusalem, and established the Christian worship there. (Euseb. Vit. Const. lib. iii. cap. 26.) It seems reasonable to suppose that here, as in most other places, the Gentiles are opposed to the Jews; and, consequently, that all the period between the destruction of Jerusalem and the restoration of the Jews to their own land, so expressly foretold in scripture, is here intended. (See Isa. xxvii. 12, 13; Ezek. xi. 17; xx. 40, 42; xxxiv. 13; xxxvi. 24, 28; xxxvii. 21—28; xxxix. 28, 29; Hos. iii. 5; Amos ix. 14, 15; and Zech. xiv. 10, 11.) With this indeed is connected the bringing in what St. Paul calls, *the fulness of the Gentiles:* Rom. xi. 25, 26. But unless it could be proved, (which I do not recollect) that the inhabitants of Palestine shall then peaceably surrender it to the returning Jews; it seems most natural to suppose *the time of the Gentiles* here signifies the time when they shall be *visited* and *punished;* which is the sense in which this very phrase, and others nearly parallel to it, frequently occur in the Old Testament; as Brennius justly observes. Compare Ezek. xxx. 3; as also Jer. xxvii. 7; l. 27; Ezek. xxi. 25, 29; xxii. 3, 4.) And, if this be the sense of it, it seems an intimation that the Turks, or some other anti-christian power, may continue possessed of the holy land till the restoration of the Jews; for one can hardly suppose their way into it should then be opened by the conquest of a Christian nation.

[i] *Except the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh could be saved,* &c.] Such were the quarrels that prevailed among the Jews, that numbers of them were destroyed by one another; and the whole country was become a scene of such desolation and bloodshed, that not only those who were shut up in Jerusalem, but the whole Jewish nation, would have suffered much more by the longer continuance of the siege, considering how much the same spirit prevailed among them in other places.—Mr. Reading, in his Life of Christ, p. 309, understands *the days being shortened for the elect's sake*, of the preservation of the Christians at Pella, whose safety he supposes to have depended on the shortening of the siege, and whom he takes to be the elect intended here. (See

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whom he hath chosen, [those days shall be shortened.] [Mat. xxiv. 22.]

whom he has graciously *chosen* to be at length partakers of the blessings of his gospel, God will so order it in his providence, that *those days shall be shortened;* for he hath still purposes of love toward the seed of Abraham, which shall at length take place; (Rom. xi. 26.) and, in the mean time, he will make their continuing a distinct people, a means of confirming the faith of Christians in succeeding ages.[k] Mark XIII. 20

21 And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not. [Mat. xxiv. 23.]

As these then are the counsels of the divine wisdom concerning this people, do not expect, that when calamities begin to threaten them, any miraculous deliverer should be raised up for them: *and if any one shall then say unto you, Behold, the Messiah* [*is*] *here, or behold,* [*he is*] *there, do not believe* [*it,*] or shew the least regard to any such report. (Compare Luke xvii. 23, p. 184.) 21

22 For false Christs, and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew [great] signs and wonders, [insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.] [Mat. xxiv. 24.]

For as this unhappy people, who are now so obstinately rejecting me, will to the last support themselves with vain hopes of that kind, and be ready eagerly to hearken to every bold impostor, *false Messiahs and false prophets shall arise, and shall* pretend to *shew great signs and prodigies,*[l] managed with *so* much art, *as* might, *if* [*it were*] *possible,* be sufficient *to deceive* even *the very elect,* and to pervert my sin- 22

Dr. Whitby on Mark xiii. 20.—Of the special providence by which the siege was shortened, see Grotius on Mat. xxiv. 22.

[k] Their continuing a distinct people, a means of confirming the faith of Christians, &c.] This I have shewn at large in my ten Sermons, Ser. x. p. 277, 279; and the reader may see the remark farther illustrated by Mr. Addison, Spectat. Vol. VII. No. 495, and in Bishop Burnet's Four Discourses, p. 8—10.

[l] *False prophets shall arise, and shew great signs and prodigies.*] This is not a mere repetition of what was said before, Mat. xxiv. 5. (p. 360,) but relates to those impostors who appeared during the time of the siege; of which see Joseph. Bell. Jud lib. vi. cap. 5. (al. vii. 11, § 2,) and Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 6. See also Grotius on Mat. xxiv. 24.—As for the objection which is urged from this text, against admitting miracles as a proof of doctrines, I would here transiently observe two things: (1.) That it cannot certainly be proved, that the works here referred to were true miracles: they might be like the lying powers, signs, and wonders mentioned 2 Thess. ii, 9. Or, (2.) That if we should for argument's sake grant them to be real miracles, yet they are supposed to be wrought at a time when there were in the Christian church teachers subsisting with superior miraculous powers. But it can never be inferred from such a supposition in that case, that God will suffer miracles to be wrought in proof of falsehood, when there are none of his servants to perform greater miracles on the side of truth. And when such superior miracles on the side of truth do exist, the opposite miracles at most can only prove, that some invisible beings of great power, who are the abettors of falsehood, are strongly engaged to support the contrary doctrine; the consideration of which must excite all wise and good men to receive a truth so opposed with greater readiness, and to endeavour to promote it with greater zeal; as they may be sure, the excellence and importance of it is proportionable to the solicitude of these malignant spirits to prevent its progress.

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cere followers and disciples themselves; though indeed their hearts shall be so established by divine grace as finally to be secured from the danger. *But be* ye cautiously *upon your guard* against so dangerous an imposition; for *behold I have* expressly *foretold you all* these *things*; that on comparing the event with the prediction, your faith may be established by those very circumstances which in another view might have a tendency to shake it. *Therefore if they shall say unto you, Behold,* we have found the expected Messiah, and *he is* now gathering his forces about him *in the wilderness* for the deliverance of his people, *do not go forth* to join yourselves to his followers; [*or*] if they shall say, *Behold, he is in the secret apartments* of some particular friend, where he is waiting to give satisfaction to those that desire it, *do not believe* [*it*,] nor give yourselves the trouble so much as to inquire into the affair. *For* you know there is, and can be, no other Messiah but me; and when I appear, it will be in a sudden, amazing, and irresistible manner; and *as the lightning breaks forth from the east, and shines* in a moment *even to the west* part of the horizon, *so* sudden and conspicuous *also shall the coming of the Son of man be*, both in his appearance to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the final judgment. (Compare Luke xvii. 24, p. 184.) And very extensive also will the desolation be; *for*, as I formerly told you, (Luke xvii. 37, p. 186,) *wheresoever the* dead *carcase is, there will the eagles* naturally *be gathered together*; and wherever the obstinate enemies of my kingdom are, they shall be sought out and destroyed; and here in particular I will send the Roman eagles against them, who shall consume and devour them as a helpless prey, not only at Jerusalem, but over the face of the whole country; and afterwards in some more distant regions, where the greatest number of Jews are settled.[m]

Mark XIII. 23

Mat. xxiv. 26

27

28

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things. [Mat. xxiv. 25.]

MAT. XXIV. 26. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth: Behold, *he is* in the secret chambers, believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

[m] In some more distant regions, &c.] Here may perhaps be an oblique intimation in this passage, of the slaughter afterwards made on the Jews elsewhere, and particularly under Adrian and Trajan; when what had been foretold by Moses (Deut. xxviii. 49, *& seq.*) was remarkably fulfilled, and as an eagle flies upon its prey, their enemies pursued them to destruction; and the calamities they underwent were such, that (as Dio Cassius informs us, Hist. lib. 69.) 50,000 were slain, 500 of their fortresses were demolished, and 900 of their chief towns in Egypt,

IMPROVEMENT.

IF our Lord urges his *disciples*, with such speedy and solicitous haste, to *flee* from the sword of God's *temporal judgments*, how much greater diligence should we give to *flee from the wrath to come!* What are any of the *little interests of life*, that out of regard to them we should be willing to continue one moment longer exposed to a danger which may sink us into everlasting perdition and despair! SECT. CLXI. Luke xxi. 21 Mark xiii. 15, 16

We have here a lively description of that aggravated *ruin* which was brought upon the *Jews* for neglecting *Christ*; even *great tribulation, such as* had never, *from the* very *beginning of the world*, fallen upon any other nation, *nor shall ever be* equalled. Thus was *his blood upon them, and their children.* (Mat. xxvii. 25.) May we never know what it is to have *this blood* crying against us, for *trampling it under foot as an unholy thing!* (Heb. x. 29.) For surely to the *Jews*, who *thus rejected the counsel of God against themselves, all these things* which they suffered were but *the beginning of sorrows*; and the *famine* and *sedition, pestilence* and *slaughter*, by which so many thousands perished, served only to consign them over to infinitely more terrible *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish*, which will at last fall *on every soul of man that doth evil*, whether *Jew* or *Gentile.* (Rom. ii. 8, 9.) Mat. xxiv. 2 7, 8

These unhappy creatures eagerly listened to the very name of a *Messiah*, by whomsoever it was assumed; while they rejected him whom God had sent them, and who had so long, and with so much importunity, been renewing to them, the offers of life and salvation. May none of us ever know the sad impatience with which condemned sinners will wish, and wish in vain, for those overtures and messages of grace which they now despise! In that sense *wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together:* wherever there is the like unbelief and impenitence, there will be in its degree the like ruin. Christ has graciously *told us these things before:* may we humbly attend to the warning, that none of this terror and destruction may ever come upon us! Mark xiii. 21, 22 Mat. xxiv. 28 Mark xiii. 23

Crete, &c. were plundered and burnt to the ground: not to mention the terrible things they afterwards suffered in France, Italy, Spain, and other parts of Europe, in the decline of the Roman empire: of all which see Dr. Jackson's Eternal Truth of the Scriptures, book, i. part 2, sect. 3, chap. 6, 10—13,

SECT. CLXII.

Christ describes the total destruction of the Jewish state by strong figures, many of them literally suiting the day of judgment; to the mention of which he proceeds, declaring the particular time of it unknown. Mat XXIV. 29—36. Mark XIII. 24—32. Luke XXI. 25—33.

LUKE XXI. 25.

SECT. CLXII.

Luke XXI. 25

OUR Lord proceeded in the awful representation of the judgments that were coming on Jerusalem, *and* said, Before this desolation shall be completely come, *there shall be*, (as I told you, ver. 11.) some extraordinary *signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;* eclipses, comets, and surprising meteors; *and on the earth* there shall be *anguish and distress of nations; the sea and the* proud *waves* thereof *roaring*, and breaking in upon the land with an irresistible inundation; 26 *While men shall be* almost *expiring with fear,*[a] *and* overwhelmed with the sad *expectation of those* calamitous *things which are coming upon the land:* for this shall not be like former invasions or captivities, which only produced some transient disorders in the state, or, at most, an interruption in the government for a few years; but it shall be attended with such a total subversion of it, and with such vast, extensive, and lasting ruin, that it shall be a most lively emblem of the desolation of the whole world at the last day.

Mat. XXIV. 29

For *immediately after the affliction of those days*, which I have now been describing,[b] *the sun shall* as it were *be darkened*, *and the moon shall*

Luke XXI. 25. AND there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea, and the waves roaring;

26—Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.—

Mat. XXIV. 29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not

[a] *Expiring with fear.*] This is the literal rendering of απο φοβου αποψυχοντων. —The *signs* here spoken of seem to be some of the latest of those mentioned in the writers referred to above, in notes [z], and [b], on ver. 10, 11, p. 361.

[b] *Immediately after the affliction of those days.*] Archbishop Tillotson, and Brenius, with many other learned interpreters, imagine that our Lord here makes the transition from the destruction of Jerusalem, which had been the subject of his discourse thus far, to the general judgment: but I think, as it would, on the one hand, be very harsh to suppose all the sufferings of the Jewish nation in all ages, to be called the tribulation of those days; so it would, on the other hand, be equally so, to say, that the general judgment, which probably will not commence till at least a thousand years after their restoration, will happen immediately after their sufferings; nor can I find any one instance in which ευθεως is used in such a strange latitude. —What is said below, (in Mat. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 30; and Luke xxi. 32; p. 377.) seems also an unanswerable objection against such an interpretation. —I am obliged therefore to explain this section as in the paraphrase; though I acknowledge many of the figures used may with more literal propriety be applied to the last day, to which there may be a remote, though not an immediate reference.

SECT. CLXII.

Mat. XXIV. 29

give her light; and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. [Mark xiii. 24, 25. Luke xxi. 26.]

not seem to *give her* usual *light; and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens*, all the mighty machines and strong movements above, *shall be shaken* and broken in pieces;[c] that is, according to the sublimity of that prophetic language to which you have been accustomed, the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the nation shall not only be shocked, but totally dissolved.

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. [Mark xiii. 26. Luke xxi. 27.]

30 *And then shall* there evidently *appear* such a remarkable hand of providence in avenging my quarrel upon this sinful people, that it shall be like *the sign of the Son of man in heaven* at the last day; *and all the tribes of the land shall then mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming* as it were *in the clouds of heaven*,[d] *with power and great glory*; for that celestial army which shall appear in the air marshalled round the city, shall be a sure token to them that the angels of God, and the great Lord of those heavenly hosts, are set as it were in array against them.

31 And [then] he shall send his angels, with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, [from the uttermost part of the earth, to the uttermost part of heaven.] [Mark xiii. 27.]

31 *And*, to pursue the allusion, as at the great day, the angels shall in a literal sense assemble all his saints together, so also *he shall then send* forth *his messengers*[e] *with the great sound* of his gospel, as *of a* loud *trumpet, and they shall assemble his elect from the four winds*, even *from one end of the heavens to the other*, or *from the uttermost part of the earth* one way, *to* those climates which lie under *the uttermost part of heaven* the other way; and multitudes of all nations shall obey

[c] *The sun shall be darkened*, &c.] It was customary with the prophets, as it still is with the eastern writers, to describe the utter ruin of states and kingdoms, not only in general by an universal darkness, but also by such strong figures as those here used, which all have their foundation in that way of speaking. Compare Isa. xiii. 10; xxxiv. 4, 10; lx. 20; Jer. xv. 9; Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; Joel ii. 30, 31; iii. 15; and Amos viii. 9.

[d] *Coming in the clouds of heaven.*] Sudden and irresistible destruction, in which much of the hand of God evidently appears, is, (as Dr. Whitby justly observes) often expressed by God's coming in the clouds: (compare Psal. xviii. 9; l. 3, 4; xcvii. 2, 3; civ. 3; Isa. xix. 1; xxvi. 21; lxvi. 15.) But I think the celestial appearances described by Josephus (as above, note [b], on Luke xxi. 11, p. 361,) lead us into the exactest interpretation of this text, and greatly illustrate the propriety of these expressions here.

[e] *Send* forth *his messengers.*] Most translations, as well as our own, greatly obscure this text, by rendering the word ἀγγέλους *angels*; for though it generally signify those *celestial spirits* who are on great occasions the messengers of God to our world, it is well known that the word refers not to their nature but to their office; and is often applied to men, and rendered *messengers*. See Mark i. 2; Luke vii. 24, 47; ix. 52; 2 Cor. viii. 23; Phil. ii. 25; and Jam. ii. 25. In some of which places it signifies, as here, *preachers of the gospel*, who were sent forth to carry on God's great design of uniting all his chosen people in one society under Christ, as their common head. Eph. i. 10.

SECT. CLXII. Luke XXI.

the summons, though the Jews have ungratefully and foolishly despised it; and the Son of man shall be honoured and trusted by millions now unborn, when this wicked and perverse nation is perished in their rebellion and infidelity.

28 *And when these things begin to come to pass,* be not you terrified and dismayed, but rather cheerfully *look upwards,*[f] *and lift up your heads* with joy and assurance; *for* whatever happens, you will be secure; and as soon as you see the first appearance of these signs, you may comfortably conclude, that *your* complete *redemption* and deliverance *draws nigh;*[g] for many of you will be safely brought home to the haven of eternal peace before these storms are ended, and the rest of you will not long survive them.

29 *And,* further to illustrate what he had been saying, *he spake to them a* very easy and familiar *parable,* saying, *Behold now,* [*and*] *learn a parable from* the example of *the fig-tree, and all the* other *trees* that drop their leaves in the 30 winter: *When* buds appear upon the fig-tree, and *its branch is now become tender, and* the sap rising in the other trees, *they shoot forth* their young *leaves,* and begin to open and spread, *you see and know of your ownselves,* by the observation you have often made, *that summer is now near at hand,* as these are certain 31 prognostications of it: *So likewise you, when you shall see all these things come to pass,* may assuredly *know that* the destruction of the Jewish state, and the advancement of *the kingdom of God* in all its glory, *is just at hand,* [*even*] *at the doors;* or that the time is coming when the desolation I have been speaking of shall come upon Jerusalem, and the gospel shall be propagated all abroad, and take such root in the world, that you may assure yourselves it shall never be destroyed.

LUKE XXI. 28. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable, [Now] behold [*and* learn a parable of] the fig-tree, and all the trees: [Mat. xxiv. 32. Mark xiii. 28.—]

30 When [his branch is yet tender, and] they now shoot forth [leaves,] ye see and know of your ownselves, that summer is now nigh at hand: [Mat. xxiv. —32. Mark xiii.—28.]

31 So likewise ye, when ye [shall] see [all] these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand, [*even* at the doors.] [Mat. xxiv. 33. Mark xiii. 29.]

[f] *Look upwards:* ανακυψατε.] This is an expression which admirably suits the load of labour and sufferings under which the apostles would be depressed in this afflicted state. See Raphel. Annot. ex. Herod. p. 270.

[g] *Your redemption draws nigh.*] As the resurrection is the time when we shall in fact be fully redeemed, or delivered from all the sad consequences of sin, and therefore is called *the redemption of our bodies:* (Rom. viii. 23; compare Eph. iv. 30, and Hos. xiii. 14.) so in a less proper sense, the deliverance from all the toils and sorrows, temptations and infirmities, of this sinful and calamitous life, may, on the like principles, be called redemption. And if we may judge of the length of the apostles' lives by the extent of their labours, though we know not the time when many of them died, there is reason to conjecture it was not till about this period; which, by the way, would be an argument they were now most of them young men.

32 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all [these things] be fulfilled. [Mat. xxiv. 34. Mark xiii. 30.]

And *verily I say unto you*, and urgé you to observe it, as absolutely necessary in order to understand what I have been saying, *That this generation* of men now living, *shall not pass away, until all these things be fulfilled*;[h] for what I have foretold concerning the destruction of the Jewish state is so near at hand, that some of you shall live to see it all accomplished with a dreadful exactness: And the rest may die in the assurance of it: for another and yet more awful day shall come when, in a literal sense, *heaven and earth shall pass away*, and the whole fabric of this visible world shall be dissolved before my majestic presence: *but my words shall not pass away* till they are perfectly fulfilled, and the efficacy of them shall remain in the eternal world which shall succeed these transitory scenes.

SECT. CLXII. Luke XXI. 32

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away. [Mat xxiv. 35. Mark xiii. 31.]

33

Mark XIII. 32. But of that day and *that* hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son,

But though Jerusalem shall be destroyed before this generation disappear, yet *of that* great decisive *day* which is appointed for the dissolution and the judgment of the world, *and* of the *hour* or season when it shall open upon men, and shall bring on their final sentence, there is *no one* who *knows* the precise time,[i] *neither the angels in heaven, nor* even *the Son* of man himself,[k] with respect to his human nature, or as a

Mark XIII. 32

[h] *This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled.*] Though Brennius and Mede, (in his Works, p. 752.) have here the honour to be followed by so great an authority as Dr. Sykes, (of Christianity, p. 60.) yet I must beg leave to say, that I cannot think the texts they collect sufficient to prove, that by *this generation* [ἡ γενεὰ αὕτη] we are here to understand *the Jewish nation through all ages*; as if our Lord intended to say, they should continue a distinct people to the judgment day. What I have expressed in the paraphrase, is plainly the most obvious sense of the words, and seems to me an evident key to the whole context, especially when compared with Mat. xvi. 28. *There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.* See note [i], on that text, Vol. I. p. 491.

[i] *Of that day and hour no one knows.*] I cannot agree with Dr. Clarke in referring this verse to the destruction of Jerusalem, the particular day of which was not a matter of great importance; and as for the season of it, I see not how it could properly be said to be entirely unknown, after such an express declaration, that it should be in *that generation*; and yet at some considerable distance, for otherwise there would not have been room for the gradual accomplishment of the many predictions uttered above. It seems therefore much fitter, with Dr. Whitby (after Grotius,) to explain it of the last day, when heaven and earth shall pass away, which is sometimes called that day with a peculiar emphasis; a phrase answering to the great or remarkable day. Compare 2 Tim. i. 12, 18. and iv. 8.

[k] *Nor* even *the Son* of man himself.] There is not any thing in this assertion of our Lord, if we consider the two natures in him, that is inconsistent with his true divinity. For what is applicable only to one nature is frequently expressed in terms inclusive of his whole person. Thus, as the endowments of his human nature were communicated in a gradual

SECT. CLXII.

part of what he is commissioned to reveal; for though it be determined by the Divine decree, it is not known to any *but my Father alone*, or the indwelling Godhead, from whom nothing can be concealed; and, as he does not think fit to disclose it, let it be your care to improve this uncertainty as an engagement to the most diligent and constant preparation for its coming.

[but my Father only.] (Mat. xxiv. 36.)

Mark XIII. 32

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us now raise our contemplations to that awful day, when all that was *figuratively* spoken of *the destruction of Jerusalem*, shall be *literally* accomplished; and let us consider our own intimate concern in it. Where will our hope and comfort, our light, and our safety be, when *the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light*, when *the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*? where, indeed, unless the almighty *God*, the everlasting *Jehovah*, by whose voice they were created, and by whose hand they shall be dashed in pieces again, shall condescend to be *our light, and our salvation?* (Psal. xxvii. 1.) And if he indeed be so, *then* we may *lift up our heads* with joy; as knowing that our complete *redemption draweth nigh*, even that long-expected *day*, which, with all its solemn horrors, has still been the brightest object of our faith and our hopes.

Mat. xxiv. 29

Luke xxi. 28

Then shall *the Son of man* indeed *come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory*, and *send his angels* to summon *his elect*, and to assemble them *from one end of heaven, to the other: for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.* (1 Thes. iv. 16.) May we hear the summons with joy, and *stand in our lot* among his chosen ones! What though the *day* and *season* be *unknown?* It is enough for us that we know that all these interposing days and years, be they ever so numerous, will at length be past; for the *promise* of the great Redeemer is our security, and he *will hasten it in its time.* (Isa. lx. 22.)

Mat. xxiv. 30, 31

Mark xiii. 32

31 These visible *heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the earth shall be removed* out of its place; but the sure *word of his promise shall never pass away;* even that *promise* which is engaged for the salvation of his people. Let us often review it;

manner to him, Jesus is said to have *increased in wisdom*; (Luke ii. 52.) and even while he was on earth, as he was present every where with respect to his Divine nature, he speaks of himself as the Son of man who is in heaven. (John iii. 13.) Nor is it at all more strange, that he should here be said not to know the day appointed for the final judgment, than that it should be elsewhere said that the Lord of glory was crucified, (1 Cor. ii. 5.) and that God purchased the church with his own blood. (Acts xx. 28.)

let us firmly realize it to our souls, and, *seeing we look for such things*, let us seriously consider *what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness.* (2 Pet. iii. 11, 14.) SECT. CLXII.

SECT. CLXIII.

Our Lord urges the suddenness of his appearance as an engagement to constant watchfulness, repeating several things which he had formerly said on that subject. Mat. XXIV. 37, *to the end.* Mark XIII. 33, *to the end.* Luke XXI. 34—36

MAT. XXIV. 37.

MAT. XXIV. 37. BUT as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

OUR Lord having told them in the preceding words, that though the time of his appearance to the general judgment was uncertain, yet the destruction of Jerusalem should happen before that generation of men was passed away, went on with his discourse, and added, *But* this I will in general inform you, that, *as* sudden and unthought-of as the deluge was which came upon the world in *the days of Noah*, *so* unexpected and surprising *also shall the coming of the Son of man*, to execute his vengeance, *be. For as in the days which were before the* universal *deluge*, *they were* so inconsiderate and secure, that they went on with all their usual business, and spent their time in entertainments, *eating and drinking*, *marrying* wives *and giving* their daughters *in marriage*, thinking of nothing but present indulgence and future settlements in the world;[a] and went on thus, in contempt of every serious admonition, even *until the* very *day that Noah entered into the ark; And knew not* nor suspected, that any evil was approaching, *till the deluge came* with an irresistible violence, *and bore them all away* with a torrent of destruction: *so also shall the coming of the Son of man be;* and, notwithstanding men have been SECT. CLXIII. Mat. XXIV. 37

38 For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

[a] *They were eating and drinking*, &c.] Dr. Woodward (in his Theory of the Earth, p. 98.) thinks, these were modest expressions to signify their giving themselves up to all the extravagancies of riot and lust; and Wolfius (in loc.) has most learnedly proved that γαμισθαι is often used in a very criminal sense. But how great reason soever there may be to believe, that the Antediluvian sinners did so, these words may be intended to express no more than the security and gaiety with which they pursued the usual employments and amusements of life, when they were on the very brink of utter destruction.

SECT. CLXIII. so frequently and plainly warned of it, yet multitudes shall be surprised in an unprepared state. (Compare Luke xvii. 26, 27, p. 184.)

Mat. XXIV. 40 I formerly told you, with relation to the temporal desolation of your country, and I now repeat it, That of *two men* who *shall then be* at work together *in the field, the one shall be seized,* 41 *and the other dismissed;*[b] And of *two women* who *shall be grinding* corn *at the* same *mill, the one shall be seized, and the other dismissed:* (compare Luke xvii. 35, 36, p. 186.) And I may say the like with respect to that important event of the final judgment; many who have been engaged in the same station and employments, and who were intimately conversant with each other, shall then be found exceedingly different in their characters and states; and some of them shall be made the prisoners of divine justice, while others shall not only be spared, but be signally favoured by God.

40 Then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left:

41 Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill, the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Luke xxi. 34 *And* therefore, that no calamities of life, or solemnities of judgment, may be dreadful to you, *take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overloaded,*[c] and your rational powers

LUKE XXI. 34. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts

[b] *Two men shall then be in the field, &c.*] Though in the paraphrase, for its better connection, I have introduced these words incidentally, and hinted how they may allusively be accommodated to the day of judgment, yet I doubt not they originally refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, to which alone they are properly applicable. After this paragraph there is not a word peculiar to that; but many circumstances are introduced which refer to the day of judgment, (and of death, as transmitting to it,) and which can only be thus understood. I therefore humbly conceive, that the grand transition, about which commentators are so much divided, and so generally mistaken, is made precisely after these two verses.—Our Lord, in the following verses of Matthew and Mark, directs their thoughts to that final solemnity in which they are so highly concerned, by repeating almost in the same words the cautions and advices he had formerly given, Luke xii. 35, & *seq.* § cxiv. in which whole context (as I there observed, note [f], p. 117.) there is no reference to those temporal calamities that were coming on the Jews, which have been here the subject of almost the whole preceding discourse. And the remembrance of what had passed on the former occasion might more easily lead them into the distinct understanding of what was now added. Though it may not be improper to recollect that the same pious care in their temper and conduct, which would be a preparative against national judgments, and entitle them to the special protection of providence in them, would also secure them from any unwelcome surprise by a call to the tribunal of God.

[c] *Your hearts be overloaded.*] The word βαρυνθωσιν properly signifies *burdened*, or *pressed down;* and so very elegantly and strongly expresses the hateful consequences of intemperance, and the load which it brings on those rational faculties which are the glory of the human nature.—The reader will observe, that Luke's account of this discourse is very short, in comparison with that of Matthew and Mark, for this obvious reason, that he had given the chief heads of it before, partly in a discourse of our Lord's last coming, which was delivered to a very numerous assembly in

be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, [Mark, take ye heed,] and pray always; that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man: [for ye know not [Mark, when the time is,] *or* what hour your Lord doth come.] [Mat. xxiv. 42. Mark xiii. 33.]

MAT. XXIV. 43. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched,

depressed and stupified *by gluttony and drunkenness*, or distracted with worldly *and secular cares; and* by this means *that* awful and important *day*, of which I have been speaking, *should come unexpected upon you. For* the character of the generality of mankind at that time will be such, that *it shall come on* the greatest part of *all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth*,[d] *as a snare* upon a thoughtless bird which, in the midst of its security, finds itself inextricably taken. (Compare Eccles. ix. 12.) Let me *therefore* address this most serious exhortation to you with an earnestness proportionable to its importance, *Watch ye* against every temptation to negligence and sin, *take heed* of every thing which might lull you into a dangerous security, *and pray always*, with the most fervent importunity, *that* through Divine grace *you may be accounted worthy to escape all these* calamitous and destructive *things which shall* assuredly *come to pass* just in the manner I have described them, *and* may be happily enabled, even in the day of his universal judgment, *to stand* forth with courage and acceptance *before the Son of man*;[e] *for you know not when the time* of his appearance *is*, [*or*] *at what hour your Lord does come* to summon you before him.

But this you know, and would do well to consider it, *that if the master of a house* that has at any time been plundered by robbers *had known* exactly *in what watch* of the night *the thief would* have *come, he would* undoubtedly *have watched* then; *and* taken care to be provided for

SECT. CLXIII.

Luke XXI. 34, 35

36

Mat. xxiv. 43

Galilee, (Luke xii. 35—48, sect. cxiv.) and partly in another discourse, relating only to the destruction of Jerusalem, which was delivered in his journey thither at the feast of dedication: (Luke xvii. 20—37, sect. cxxviii.) Here therefore he chooses to omit what had been inserted on either of those occasions; as John, who probably wrote after the accomplishment of this prophecy, entirely omits it, as already so largely recorded by the former three; from whom, considering the circumstance of time, it came with infinitely better grace than it could afterwards have done from him.

[d] *It shall come on all them that dwell*, &c.] The exhortations that are connected with this clause limit the extent of the word [*all*] to a considerable number; for were it to be taken otherwise, there could have been no room to offer them.

[e] *To stand before the Son of man.*] I do not apprehend that this is merely the counterpart of escaping the things spoken of before. There were thousands of the Jews that by one providence or another escaped temporal destruction, who could with no propriety be said *to stand before the Son of man at his coming.* I have therefore paraphased this latter clause as an advance upon the former, which gives this context a greater connection, and juster distinction, than the order in which most harmonies place these verses.

SECT. CLXIII. Mat. XXIV. 44

him, *would not have suffered his house to be broke open*, or have left the thief to make his advantage by coming at an unexpected time. And *therefore* as it is of so much greater consequence on this occasion that you should be prepared against an unseasonable surprise, *be ye also ready* and learn from such a common occurrence, to be upon your guard: *for* I tell you again, That *at an hour when you think not* of it, *the Son of man cometh*; and multitudes of people will be as much surprised as if they had never heard in their whole lives that he would come at all. (Compare Luke xii. 39, 40. p. 117.)

and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not, the Son of man cometh.

Mark xiii. 34

[*For the Son of man is*] in this respect *as a man travelling to a distant country, who, as he was leaving his house, gave authority to his head-servants* to direct and oversee the rest in their business, *and* assigned *to every man* in the family *his* proper *work, and* particularly *commanded the porter to watch*, and to see to it that the doors were properly secured, and ready to be opened to him at his return.

MARK XIII. 34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

Mat. xxiv. 45

And *who now*, do you my apostles suppose, *is the faithful and prudent servant*, of *whom his Lord has* so good an opinion as to have *appointed* him *ruler over* the rest of *his household, to give them* [*their*] proper portion of *food in due season?* You must easily apprehend that the expression may with the utmost propriety be applied to that high office with which you are invested, and to the confidence placed in your integrity and wisdom. And, to excite you to discharge this office with the greatest fidelity, let me add, *Happy* indeed *is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find thus employed* in the proper duties of his important office, distributing to each his portion in a proper manner.[f]

MAT. XXIV. 45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season.

46 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 *Verily I say unto you* again, as I formerly did, *That he will* prefer him as highly as if a man

47 Verily I say unto you, That he

[f] *Happy is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh*, &c.] As no peculiar rewards were conferred on any of the apostles, or other faithful ministers, at the time of Christ's coming to destroy Jerusalem, this clause sufficiently proves a reference to the final judgment; and will not permit us with Dr. Hammond, to understand the Gnostics, or, with Dr. Whitby, the apostate Jews, as particularly intended by the wicked servant mentioned afterwards; which seems plainly to refer to a debauched and persecuting clergy, hypocritically pretending to a distinguished zeal for Christian forms and institutions.

shall make him ruler over all his goods.

should *make* his domestic steward, who had served *him* faithfully, *ruler* or director *of all his estate*, as a reward for his care in the due management of his office. (Compare Luke xii. 42—44, page 118.)

SECT. CLXIII. Mat. XXIV.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken:

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of;

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But, on the other hand, the faithless wretch that is dishonest in the execution of so high a charge shall be severely punished: and *if that wicked servant shall* presume to *say in his heart, My lord delays his coming; And shall* on that presumption *begin to beat* and abuse those of *his fellow-servants*, who are more faithful than himself, *and to eat and drink* in a riotous and extravagant manner *with the* debauched and *drunken* part of them, or with other dissolute persons; he will do it at his peril: For *the lord of that servant shall* certainly *come in a day when he does not expect* [*him*], *and in an hour when he is not* at all *aware*, and cannot have time to put on a face of better order, or to provide and invent artful excuses; *And*, seeing him in the midst of his revels and usurpations, he shall scourge him so severely, that he *shall* even *cut him asunder*,[g] *and appoint* [*him*] *his portion with hypocrites*, the most odious kind of sinners in the sight of God:[h] with these shall this false creature be righteously doomed to dwell for ever in those doleful regions where *there shall be* nothing but *weeping and gnashing of teeth*, proportionable to his former indulgence and luxury, and to the importance of that trust which he so wickedly betrayed. (Compare Luke xii. 45, 46, p. 118, 119.)

48 49 50 51

Mark xiii 35.

Mark, XIII. 35. Let me then caution you, O my apostles and

[g] *Shall cut him asunder.*] That tearing and cutting persons into several pieces was a cruel punishment used among the ancients, none acquainted with antiquity can doubt; and Wolfius on this text has demonstrated it more copiously than any other critic I have seen. Yet, as the criminal is here represented as surviving this punishment, and consigned over to *wailing and gnashing of teeth*, after it had been inflicted. I therefore, as before, (Luke xii. 46) must understand it of being severely scourged, after which idle slaves were often thrown into a prison, where they lived miserably in every respect. To this our Lord alludes with a most obvious propriety. See sect. cxiv. note [l].

[h] *His portion with hypocrites.*] Mahomet in his Alcoran mentions Seven Caverns in Hell the deepest and most wretched of which is to be inhabited by hypocrites. (Sur. iv. v. 144.) Elsner, who takes this for a Jewish notion, by a very singular criticism supposes it, or something analogous to it, referred to here, and Rev. xxi. 8, where he thinks liars are the same with hypocrites: and observes very precariously, that taking the fearful and unbelieving, or those that through cowardice apostatize, for the first sort of criminals, liars are the seventh class.

SECT. CLXIII.

ministers, never to suffer this important exhortation, which I have now been giving you, to be forgot in any circumstance of life; but *watch ye therefore* continually, *for ye know not when the master of the house cometh*, whether *in the evening*-watch, *or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning*: Early and late hold yourselves in a prepared posture, *lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping*, and negligent of your proper duty. *And what I say to you* in public characters, *I say to all* my disciples, in every station of life, and in every age, *Watch*; for in every age and station you will have need to do it, and security may be attended with the most fatal consequences.

Mark XIII. 35. 36 37

Watch ye therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh (at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning):
36 Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.
37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT slothful hearts must we have, if these *repeated admonitions* do not awaken us; even *line upon line, and precept upon precept?* The *patience of God is waiting* upon us, as it did on the old world, *while the ark was preparing*: (1 Pet. iii. 20.) May we take the warning, and seek shelter before the door be shut against us! Let us therefore *take heed, lest sensuality and secular cares overcharge* and depress *our hearts*, and amuse us with vain delusions, till *sudden* and unavoidable *destruction* come upon us. (1 Thess. v. 3.)

Luke xxi. 36 Mat. xxiv. 42 Mark xiii. 33 Luke xxi. 34

We are by profession the *domestics of Christ*. Let us attend to the *offices* he has assigned us, though he seem at a distance. Let us diligently *wait his coming*, at whatever season. Let his *ministers* especially wait it; and be solicitous, that they may be *found so doing*, conducting themselves like *wise stewards of the mysteries of God*, dispensing to every one his portion of *food in due season*. Then will our *account* be honourable, and our *reward* glorious.

Mark xiii. 34 Mat. xxiv. 45, 46 47

May God deliver us from the guilt and condemnation of the cruel, the imperious, and the luxurious *servant*, who *began to beat his fellows, and to eat and drink with the drunken*; since we are expressly told his dreadful doom! Justly does our Lord declare that to such a one he will *appoint a portion with hypocrites*, terrible as their portion must be; for no hypocrisy can be baser than to call ourselves the *servants* and *ministers of Christ*, while we are the slaves of ambition, avarice, and intemperance. Wherever such are found, under whatever mask and form, may he reform them by his grace, or disarm them of that power and influence which they continually abuse to his dishonour, and to their own aggravated damnation! Let us in the mean time be

48, 49 51

exhorting each other daily, while it is called to-day, lest any by insensible degrees *be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;* (Heb. iii. 13.) and let us always remember, that every exhortation which we give to others returns with redoubled weight upon ourselves. SECT. CLXIII.

SECT. CLXIV.

Christ enforces his exhortation to watchfulness, by the parable of the ten virgins. Mat. XXV. 1—13.

MAT. XXV. 1.

MAT. XXV. 1. THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

OUR Lord, in order to impress upon the minds of his hearers a concern about the great and awful day of future judgment, to which the latter part of his preceding discourse had so plainly referred, went on to represent it under a variety of most lively figures, and particularly by the following parable; saying, *Then*, or in that day of final account, when the faithful servant shall be rewarded, and the treacherous hypocrite so severely punished, *shall the kingdom of heaven*, or the state of things under the gospel dispensation, appear to *be like* the case of *ten virgins*,[a] *who*, being invited to a marriage-feast, (which, according to the custom of this country, was to be celebrated in the night,) *took their lamps* as soon as it began to grow dark, *and went out* together *to meet the bridegroom*, and to light him to the house where the banquet was to be kept. SECT. CLXIV. Mat. XXV. 1.

2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

2 *And* it appeared by their conduct, that *five of them were prudent* persons, *and five* of them were *foolish* and inconsiderate, who made no provision against an accident which might very

[a] *Ten virgins.*] This whole parable contains a plain reference to the custom which prevailed among the Jews then, and still prevails among many eastern nations: (see The Customs of the Jews and Indians compared, p. 41, *& seq.*) The bridegroom used to conduct his bride home in the evening by the light of lamps, which were used, (as Elsner shews, Observ. Vol. I. p. 114, 115,) by the Jews and Romans on the like occasion: they were carried by bride-maids, who used afterwards to sup with them; and some tell us their number must at least be *ten*.—It seems, from the circumstances of this parable, that if any of the neighbours, besides those who were directly invited, thought it worth their while to pay their respect to the new married couple, it was esteemed a decent piece of civility to admit them to a share in the bridal feast, if they made their appearance at a proper time.

SECT. CLXIV. Mat. XXV. 3.

naturally happen. *They that were foolish, when they took their lamps*, went forth with them lighted, but *did not take any oil with them*, beside that which was at first poured in:

4 *Whereas the prudent* maidens, considering that they might perhaps be obliged to wait some hours, *took* a reserve of *oil* with them *in their vessels*, which they carried *with their lamps*, to feed the flame when the former stock should be wasted.

3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them.

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 *But while the bridegroom* for a long time *delayed* his coming, as they were sitting near the place from whence they expected him to come, *they all* of them *slumbered, and* at length *fell* 6 fast *asleep. And in the* very *middle of the night*,[b] *there was a* loud *cry made* in the street, *Behold, the bridegroom is coming, go ye out* immediately *to meet him*, and arise to attend the procession according to order.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.

7 *Then all those virgins* presently *arose, and*, to prepare for his reception, *dressed their lamps*, that they might shine as bright, and appear as 8 clean as possible. *And the foolish* damsels in great surprise *said to the prudent, Give us* some *of your oil, for* you seem to have a great stock with you; whereas *our lamps are gone out*, and 9 all our oil is spent. *But the prudent replied, [We cannot do it,] lest there should not be enough for us and you*, and so we should all be left on a sudden without light, and the bridegroom be disappointed and affronted; *but rather go ye to them that sell* oil in the neighbourhood, *and buy* some *for yourselves*, as soon as possible, that ye may follow and join the procession.[c]

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so*: lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 *And while they went to buy* it at that inconvenient time of night, *the bridegroom* and his retinue *came; and those* maidens *that were ready* to receive him, joined the company; and when

10 And when they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were

[b] *In the middle of the night.*] Perhaps the tradition which Jerom mentions, that asserted Christ would come to judgment at midnight, might be borrowed from hence; though to be sure it is a very absurd one, since that can be the case only under one meridian at a time. —A celebrated commentator has clouded this parable exceedingly, by attempting to explain it of the different effects Christ's admonition concerning the destruction of Jerusalem would have on different persons.

[c] *Buy for yourselves.*] This seems merely an ornamental circumstance; and it is strange, that any Popish writers should consider it as favouring their doctrine of a stock of merits in the church, founded on works of supererogation; since, if it referred to them at all, (which there is no reason to imagine,) it would rather expose, than encourage any dependence upon them.

ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.

they came to the bridal-house, they *went in with him to the marriage-feast; and*, to prevent disturbance, *the door was shut* and fastened. SECT. CLXIV. Mat. XXV. 11

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

And some time after the other virgins also came, and, knocking at the door, called with great importunity, *saying, Sir, Sir*, we desire you would *open to us*, who are also some of your guests, though by an unfortunate accident we are come a little too late.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

But he, being unwilling to be disturbed in the feast, and to open the door again, *answered* them, *saying, Truly, I say unto you, I know you not* whence you are;[d] my house is already furnished with guests, and I will admit no more. Thus these thoughtless creatures entirely lost both their labour and expence, meeting with nothing but disappointment and shame. And such will be your case if you content yourselves with a mere empty profession of religion, while you sink into a careless and negligent conduct, and remain destitute of that principle of real piety which ought to give lustre and vigour to it. 12

13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

See to it, *therefore*, that you maintain a constant *watch*, not presuming on preparations to be made hereafter; *for*, your removal may be much more sudden than you are aware, and *ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh* to receive his prepared people to himself, and for ever to exclude the hypocrite and the sinner from the entertainments of his heavenly kingdom. 13

IMPROVEMENT.

Let us apply our hearts to the obvious instructions which this well-known *parable* so naturally suggests. We are under a *religious profession:* our *lamps* are in our hands; and we *go forth* as those that expect *to meet Christ;* as those that desire and hope to be admitted to the *marriage-supper of the Lamb.* But, alas, how few are there, that are truly *prepared* for such a blessedness! Would to God that there were reason to hope that the *Christian church* were so equally divided, that *five* of *ten* in it had the *oil* Mat. xxv. 1 2, 3, 4

[d] *I know you not.*] This circumstance in the parable is not absurd; for nothing intimated a personal acquaintance with them, and guests asking admittance with such a pretence, might have been multiplied beyond all reason and convenience. At least its significancy in the application is very apparent and important.

SECT. CLXIV. of divine grace in their hearts, to render them *burning and shining lights!*

Ver. 5. Let even such as have it, be upon their guard; for our Lord intimates, that the *wise*, as well as *the foolish virgins*, are too apt to *slumber and sleep*, and carelessly to intermit that *watch* which 6 they ought constantly to maintain. There may be, at an unexpected time, *a midnight cry*. Happy the souls that can hear it with pleasure; being not only habitually, but actually *ready* to obey the summons! Happy they, that have their *loins girded*, and their *lamps burning!* (Luke xii. 35.)

8, 9 The *foolish virgins* saw their error too late: they applied to *the wise*; but their application was vain. And as vain will the hope of those be who trust to the *intercession* of *departed saints*, or any supposed redundancy of *merit in them*, while they are them- 10—12 selves strangers to a holy temper and life. In vain will they cry, *Lord, Lord, open to us. The door* of mercy will be *shut* for ever, and the *workers of iniquity* utterly disowned. The *day of grace* has its limits; and for those that have trifled it away, there remaineth nothing *but the blackness of darkness for ever.* (Jude, ver. 13.)

SECT. CLXV.

Christ repeats the parable of the talents, in a form something different from that in which he had before delivered it. Mat. XXV. 14—30.

MAT. XXV. 14.

SECT. CLXV. Mat. XXV. 14 JESUS, having delivered the preceding parable of the virgins, went on farther to illustrate the subject by the repetition of a parable resembling one which he had used some time before; (Luke xix. 12—27, § cxliv.) and said, Let me again remind you of the great importance of preparing for my coming by a diligent improvement of your gifts: *for* the time when [*the Son of man*] shall come, and the grand administration of judgment attending it, [*will be*] *as* the proceedings of *a man* [*who*] *going a* long *journey, called his servants* together, *and deliver-* 15 *ed his effects to them. And to one* of them *he gave five talents*,[a] *and to another two, and to*

MAT. XXV. 14. FOR *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods:

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and

[a] *To one he gave five talents.*] According to Dr. Prideaux's calculation, if these were talents of gold, the value of the five must have been 36,000 pounds sterling, and if silver, 2250 pounds. (See the Preface to his Connection, p. 20.)

to another one; to every man according to his several ability: and straightway took his journey,

another one; to every man according to his respective *capacity* to manage the sum, and to the prospect there might reasonably be of his improving it: *and immediately he went away*, and set forward on his journey. SECT. CLXV. Matt. XXV. 15

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

And he who had received the five talents, went and engaged in business, *and traded with them* in so diligent a manner during the absence of his master, that he doubled the sum, *and produced five talents more.* 16

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

And in like manner he who had [*received*] *the two* was so industrious in employing them to the best advantage, that *he also gained two more.* 17

18 But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

But he who had received but one talent, being displeased that he had been intrusted with no more, was seized with sullen indolence and servile fear, and *went away* directly, *and* attempted no improvement of it, but privately *digged* [*a hole*] *in the earth, and hid his master's money* in it, till he should return home. 18

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

Thus the matter passed off for a while; *but after some considerable time, the master of those servants comes* home *and makes up his accounts with them,* demanding from each the sum with which he had been intrusted, and inquiring what was the interest he had gained by it. 19

20 And so he that had received five talents came, and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

And he who had received the five talents came near, *and brought other five talents* with them, *saying, Sir,* thou wast pleased so far to intrust me, that *thou didst deliver to me five talents,* when setting out on thy journey; and such is the improvement I have made of them, that *behold, I have* doubled the sum, and *gained to them five talents more.* 20

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou

And his master said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, [b] *thou hast been faithful in* the management of *a* 21

And perhaps this great sum was chosen, to intimate the value and importance of those capacities and opportunities committed to every reasonable creature, and especially to every professing Christian. But I do not lay any very great stress on this remark, because it is plain, that as Homer uses the word ταλαντον for a sum, or perhaps a small wedge of gold, of considerably less value than the price of two fat oxen, [Iliad ψ. ver. 750, 751). so the signification of it among much later writers is very indeterminate.

[b] *Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*] The original word ευ has a peculiar force and energy, far beyond what I can exactly express in English. It was used by auditors or spectators in any public exercise, to express the highest applause when any part had been excellently performed. Bravely done! comes something near it, but is not equally elegant or forcible.

SECT. CLXV. Mat. XXV.

few things; and, having proved thee to be so in this lower trust, *I will* prefer thee to a higher, and *set thee over many* more valuable *things* than these: in the mean time, *enter thou into* 21 *the joy of thy master*, and share with me in the banquet prepared for myself and my friends, on this happy occasion of my return.

hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

22 *He also who had received the two talents came* forwards, *and said, Sir*, thou wert so indulgent, that *thou didst deliver to me* at thy going hence *two talents*, which I have endeavoured to employ as carefully as I could; and *behold*, by trafficking with them *I have gained two other talents* 23 *to them*. And *his master said unto him*, as he had done to the former, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant*, thy care and diligence is as agreeable to me as if thy trust had been greater; *thou hast been* evidently *faithful in a few things*; and *I will* in like manner prefer thee to a higher trust, and *set thee over many* more valuable *things* than these: in the mean time, come to the entertainment now prepared, and *enter thou* with thy companion *into the joy of thy master*.

22 He also that had received two talents, came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 *But he also who had received the one talent*,[c] *came and said*, with a sullen and gloomy countenance, *Sir, I knew thee, that thou art a severe man*, and that it is a very difficult thing to please thee, since thou art so exact with thy servants, as even to think of *reaping where thou didst not sow, and* of *gathering whence thou hadst not scattered* any thing that could be taken up; requiring more in many instances than it is possible for them to do, be they ever so 25 careful: *And being terrified* with this thought, I concluded that, if by any accident thy money should miscarry under my management, thou wouldst shew me no mercy; and therefore *I went away*, as soon as I had received it, *and hid thy talent in the earth*, in a place where it has been very

24 Then he which had received the one talent came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the

[c] *He who had received the one talent.*] This may intimate that we are accountable for the smallest advantages with which we are intrusted; but it cannot imply that they who have received much will ordinarily pass their account best; for it is too plain in fact, that most of those whose dignity, wealth, and genius, give them the greatest opportunities of service, seem to forget they have either any master in heaven to serve, or any future reckoning to expect; and many of them render themselves much more criminal than this *wicked and slothful servant* who *hid his talent in the earth*.

earth: lo, there thou hast *that is* thine.

secure; so that I have now taken it up, and *behold* [*there*] *thou hast thine own* again, and will find it to be the full sum I received. SECT. CLXV.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed.

And his master answering, said unto him with a just indignation, *Thou wicked and slothful servant*, what a false and scandalous excuse is this, and how easily may it be retorted upon thee! For if it were indeed, as thou maliciously sayest, and *thou knewest* that I was such a tyrannical and unreasonable man as thou hast described, even *that I reap where I did not sow, and* expect to *gather* something up from *whence I had not scattered* it, thou mightest certainly depend upon it that I should expect to reap where I had sowed, and to gather where I had scattered that which, in this instance, as well as the others, might have been an increasing seed. And *therefore*, if thou hadst been afraid to employ it in trade, as these my faithful servants have done, *thou shouldst have put my money to the bankers* upon sufficient security; *and* thus *when I came I might* at least *have received mine own with* the common *interest*. And then, turning to the attendants, he said, *Take ye therefore the talent* which he has thus abused *from him, and give it to him that has ten talents*, as a farther token of my acceptance and favour. *For* I would have all my servants observe, that I shall constantly make this a maxim in my behaviour, That *to every one that hath*, and diligently improves what he hath, more *shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not* improved it to any valuable purpose, *even what he hath shall be taken away:* (compare Mat. xiii. 12; Mark iv. 25; Luke viii. 18; xix. 26.) Such unfaithful creatures must expect to be stripped of all, and not imagine that I will perpetually suffer my trusts to be abused, and my business to be neglected. *And*, to deter others from such an idle and unfaithful conduct, *cast ye the unprofitable servant*, who has so wickedly abused my goodness, *into the* dreadful *darkness which is without;* and *there*, instead of the delight and joy to which my faithful servants shall be introduced, there *shall be* nothing but *weeping and gnashing of the teeth*. Now this horrible darkness, to which my parable refers, is no other

Mat. XXV. 26

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,

SECT. CLXV. than the dungeon of hell; to which every unfaithful servant must expect to be condemned in that approaching day of general account: fail not therefore to observe and report what I now say, that it may give the alarm to all who need it.

Mat. XXV. 30

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT can excite us to a becoming care and activity in the duties of life, if we are deaf to those various and important motives which this excellent *parable* suggests? We have each of us received our *talents*, whether *five*, or *two*, or *one*; and if we be *faithful*, it matters not much under which of these classes we fall. Our acceptance and reward will be proportionable to our diligence; nor will any be blamed because he has not *received five*, though many will be condemned for *neglecting one*.

Mat. xxv. 15

19 Yet a little while, and *our Lord comes to reckon with us*, and even now his eye is continually upon us. Let us ask our own souls, with what temper, with what courage, with what cheerfulness, shall we appear before him! Let us think of *that appearance* with awe, but not with terror. Away with every *unjust thought* and reasoning, (with whatever artifice it be excused, with whatever honourable name it be dignified,) that would represent him as *a rigorous and severe Master*, and produce a servile dread, which would cut the sinews of industry, and sink the soul into a sullen negligent despair.

24

30 Whatever our particular snares in life may be, let us think of the *doom* of the *slothful servant*, to awaken our souls, and to deter us from every degree of unfaithfulness. And, on the other hand, let us often reflect on the unutterable transport which will overflow the breast of every real *Christian*, when his gracious *Master* shall condescend, in so honourable a manner, to commemorate his honest, though feeble, attempts of service; and shall say, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful in a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!* May *that joy* be the great object of our hopes and pursuits! and may our daily care in the improvement of every *talent* lodged in our hands, be a token to us, that it will be sure and great!

21, 23

SECT. CLXVI.

Christ concludes this important discourse with a plain and affecting description of the last judgment, and of the different sentences then to be passed and executed on the righteous and the wicked. Mat. XXV. 31, *to the end.*

MAT. XXV. 31.

WHEN the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

MAT. XXV. 31.

OUR Lord, having hitherto described his last coming in a parabolical manner, thought it proper to conclude his discourse with a plainer account of it, which might serve as a key to many preceding passages; and he added, *When* that great and illustrious Person, whom you have so often heard of, and so well known, by the title of *the Son of man, shall come in* all *his* final *glory*,[a] in the most public honours of his mediatorial kingdom, to which all things shall then be completely subjected; (1 Cor. xv. 25, 28.) *and all the holy angels*, who have long been subjected to him as his ministering servants, shall come *with him; then shall he sit upon his glorious* and majestic *throne*, conspicuous in the eyes of the whole world, as the universal Judge. *And all the nations* of men, who have lived on earth from the remotest ages of time, *shall be assembled before him;*[b] *and he shall separate them from each other*, according to their different characters which he most perfectly knows, with as much ease *as a shepherd separates the sheep* which belong to his flock, *from the goats* which may be mingled with them, and places them in distinct companies. *And he shall set the sheep*, that is, the righteous, whom he will own as such, and whose characters resemble the innocence, meekness, and usefulness of that animal, *on his right-hand*, in

SECT. CLXVI. Mat. XXV. 31

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his

[a] *When the Son of man shall come in his glory.*] If we observe the correspondence between these words and those in chap. xxiv. 30, 31 (p. 375), it may seem probable, that Christ intended to teach his disciples to conceive of his *first coming* to the destruction of Jerusalem as a kind of emblem of his *final appearance to judgment*; and consequently it will authorise us to use some of the texts in the former chapter when discoursing of that great and important day.—I hope every reader will observe with what majesty and grandeur our Lord speaks of himself in this section, which is one of the noblest instances of the true sublime that I have any where read; and indeed few passages, even in the sacred writings themselves, seem to equal it. Methinks we can hardly read it without imagining ourselves before the awful tribunal it describes.

[b] *All the nations shall be assembled before him.*] Had the notion which prevailed among some later Jews, that the Gentiles should have *no part* in the *resurrection*, been as old as our Lord's time, it is easy to see these words might have been understood as a direct intended opposition to it.

SECT. CLXVI. Mat XXV.

token of his favour to them, and of the farther honours he will bestow upon them: *but the goats*, that is, the wicked, who are so offensive to him, that they may justly be represented by goats,

33 he shall place *on* [*his*] *left*, to intimate his displeasure against them, and their final removal from amongst his people; nor shall the haughtiest and mightiest sinner be able to resist that appointment by which he is placed in this situation to avoid his sentence.[c] (Compare Ezek. xxxiv. 17, 18.)

right-hand, but the goats on the left.

34 *Then*, when by the ministry of the angelic attendants they are thus separated from each other, *the* great *King* of glory and of grace, who presides over this grand solemnity, *shall*, with the most condescending endearment, *say to them on his right-hand, Come, ye blessed* and favourite people *of my Father*, approach yet nearer to me, that, having been assessors with me in what yet remains of this day's awful proceedings (1 Cor. vi, 3), you may go in with me to *inherit the kingdom* of holiness, glory, and joy, appointed for your portion in the Divine purpose and decree, and *prepared for you*

35 *from the foundation of the world.* And I am now descended to receive you to this kingdom with all these public marks of approbation and honour; *for* I well remember your good deeds in the days of your flesh, and felt my own bowels refreshed by them, when *I was hungry, and ye gave me* [*food*] *to eat;* when *I was thirsty, and ye caused me to drink;* when *I was a stranger, and ye took me in* like one of your

36 own families; When [*I was*] *naked, and ye clothed me;* when *I was sick, and ye looked after me;*[d] when *I was* shut up *in* the solitude, confinement, and affliction of a *prison, and ye*

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right-hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

[c] Nor shall the haughtiest sinner, &c.] I can imagine no more magnificent image than this; the assembled world distinguished with such unerring penetration, and distributed into two grand classes, with as much ease, as sheep and goats are ranged by a shepherd in different companies.—The propriety with which our Lord speaks of himself in the following words, by the title of *the King* is very observable; and it adds unutterable beauty to the condescending words he is represented as speaking on this great occasion.

[d] *I was sick, and ye looked after me.*] This seems the exactest sense of ἐπεσκέψασθέ με, which in general signifies to *take the oversight and care* of any thing that requires diligent inspection and attendance: (compare Jam. i. 27, and Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 117): and it strongly intimates that such an attendance on the poor in their illness is a very acceptable charity: and this is what many may have an opportunity of doing who have very little money to spare.

SECT. CLXVI.

Mat. XXV. 37

came kindly *to* condole with *me* in my sufferings, and to relieve my necessities there.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

Then shall the righteous, in humble amazement, be ready to *answer him, and say, Lord,* what service were we ever capable of doing thee, that we can deserve such notice from thee? *When did we* ever *see thee hungry, and fed* [*thee?*] *or thirsty, and caused* [*thee*] *to drink?*

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?*

Or when did we ever *see thee* in the destitute condition of *a stranger, and took* [*thee*] *in? or*

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

naked, and clothed [*thee?*] *Or when did we* ever *see thee sick, or in prison, and came to thee* for thy relief? We never saw thee, blessed Lord, in such circumstances of distress, nor ever had an opportunity of shewing any such kindness to thee, that thou shouldst now distinguish us in such a manner, and speak so honourably of the service we have done thee.

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

And the King, answering with renewed condescension from his exalted throne, *shall* not disdain to *say unto them,* I well know that ye abounded in such kind and compassionate actions to the necessitous and afflicted saints around you: and *verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did* [*it*] *unto one of the least* and poorest *of these my* dear *brethren,* who now stand with you in this happy company, *ye* in effect *did* [*it*] *to me:*[e] and I declare it in the face of all the world, That I take and reward it as if I had been relieved in person, and joyfully welcome you to that blessed world, where you shall be for ever reaping the harvest of these labours of love.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Then, when his faithful servants are thus acquitted and honoured, *he shall* turn and *say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed* and detestable creatures, *into the* agonies of that *everlasting* and unquenchable *fire,* which was originally *prepared for the devil and his angels,*[f] whose companions you must for ever be in the regions of horror and despair.

42 For I was an

And ye cannot but know in your own consciences that ye

[e] *Ye did it to me.*] That *alms-deeds* should be remembered with peculiar regard in the day of judgment, was a notion that early prevailed among the Jews, as appears by the Chaldee Paraphrase on Eccles. ix. 7. which bears a remarkable resemblance to these words of Christ, and might perhaps be an imitation of them. See Mede's Works, p. 81.

[f] *Prepared for the devil and his angels.*] There is a remarkable difference between our Lord's expression here, and in ver. 34. There the kingdom is said to have been *prepared for the righteous from the foundation of the world;* whereas here the everlasting fire is not said to have been *prepared for the wicked,* but *for the devil and his angels.* Compare Rom. ix. 22, 23.

SECT. CLXVI. Mat XXV. 43

well deserve it; *for I was hungry, and ye did not give me* so much as bread *to eat; I was thirsty, and ye did not give me* so much as water *to drink; I was* wandering among you as *a* poor helpless *stranger, and ye did not take me in* among your domestics and guests; I was *naked, and ye did not clothe me; I* was *sick, and in prison, and ye did not look after me,* or do any thing at all for my relief.

hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink. 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 *Then shall they also answer and say unto him,*[g] *Lord,* we are surprised at so strange a charge, and cannot apprehend ourselves liable to it; for *when did we* ever *see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not* to the best of our abilities *minister to thee?* If we had ever seen thee in distress, we would not have neglected to relieve thee; but we had never any opportunity of doing it.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 And *then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you,* and declare it in the most solemn manner, That *inasmuch as ye did [it] not to one of the least of these* once necessitous, though now triumphant saints, who dwelt among you on earth, and needed your assistance, *ye did [it] not to me;* and I justly thought myself neglected and injured when you shut up the bowels of your compassion towards them.

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, In as much as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 *And* so, to conclude all, *these* miserable wretches, notwithstanding all the excuses they can urge, *shall go away into* a most dreadful state of *everlasting punishment; but the righteous,* through the abundant grace of God manifested by his Son, shall enter *into everlasting life:*[h] and thus the great scene shall close in the eternal happiness or misery of every human creature who has ever lived on the face of this earth.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

[g] *Then shall they also answer,* &c.] Perhaps it may only intimate this shall be the language of their hearts, which Christ perceiving, will reply to it. I see no necessity for supposing they shall actually plead thus. Multitudes will no doubt remember they have often heard what reply will be made to such a plea: God grant that none who read it here may be in the number of those to whom it will be made.

[h] *Everlasting punishment, — everlasting life.*] As the original word αιωνιον is the same in both places, I thought it proper to use the same word in the translation of both; and miserable are they that dare venture their souls on its signifying a limited duration in either.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us now behold, with an attentive eye, and a solicitous heart, *the end of all the living;* that awful scene, in which the various dispensations of God to mankind shall terminate in the solemn day, *when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and sit on his* magnificent *throne. All nations* and people *shall be assembled before him,* and *we* must make up a part of the assembly *The sheep* and the *goats* must then be *separated:* and, O my soul, amongst which wilt thou then be numbered? Is there an inquiry, is there a care of greater, of equal, of comparable importance? SECT. CLXVI. Mat. XXV. 31 32

Let us view the *sentence* we must shortly hear, as *he* who will himself pronounce it has been pleased to give us a copy of it.—Can we conceive any thing more dreadful than *that* which shall be passed on *those on the left hand?* To be driven from the presence of *Christ* as *accursed,* and to be consigned over to a devouring *fire!* and this not only to the tortures of a moment, or an hour, (as in some painful executions that have been known here,) but to *everlasting fire,* yea to fire *prepared for the devil and his angels,* where they will be perpetual companions, and perpetual tormentors! Should not the thought that he is in danger, in hourly danger, of being sealed up under this sentence, awaken the most stupid sinner, and engage him eagerly to cry out, *What shall I do to be saved?*—And *on whom* is this sentence passed? Let us attentively observe it! Not merely on the most gross and abandoned sinners, but on those who have lived in an habitual neglect of their duty: not merely on those who have ravaged and persecuted the saints, (though surely *their furnace* will be *heated seven times hotter* than that of others,) but even on those who have *neglected to relieve them.* 41 42, 43

On the other hand, let us seriously reflect what it will be, to be owned by Christ before the assembled world; and to hear him saying with a sweet smile, and with a voice of harmony and love, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* How infinite is the love that prepared that kingdom for us before we had a being! how rich the blood that purchased it! how overflowing the grace that bestows it on such mean, such undeserving creatures! *Bless the Lord, O our souls!* in the prospect of it. *Let men curse,* O Lord, if *thou* wilt thus *bless:* (Psal. cix. 28.) Let them load our names with infamy, if thou wilt adorn them with such glory: let all the kingdoms of the earth, and all the pomp of them, be despised and trampled under foot, when offered as an equivalent for this infinitely more glorious kingdom. 34

Let us attentively observe *the character* of those who are to receive it. They are the useful, and the benevolent souls: such 35, 36

SECT. CLXVI. Ver. 40. as have *loved the Lord Jesus Christ*, not only in his name, and ordinances, and promises, but have loved him in his laws, and in *his people* too; and have known him in those humble forms in which he has been pleased, as it were *by proxy*, to appear among us. *I was hungry, and ye fed me; thirsty, and ye gave me drink*, &c.; for *in as much as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.* Amazing words! that the *meanest saint* should be owned by the *King of glory* as one of *his brethren!* Irresistible argument to those that do indeed believe these words, to stir them up to abound *in every good word and work!* Under this impression, methinks, instead of *hiding ourselves* from those who should be to us *as our own flesh* by virtue of our common union to him, we should not only hearken to their entreaties, but even *search them out* in those corners to which modest want may sometimes retire, and cast about in our thoughts how we may secure any happy opportunity of relieving some poor *saint, for their sakes*, and *for their Master's*, and even *for our own.* What if *Christ* came to us in person, as a poor helpless *stranger?* What if we saw him *destitute of food and raiment*, or in want of any other necessaries of life? Should we not contend for it as an honour which of us should *receive him into our houses*, which of us should *entertain him at our table*, which of us should even strip ourselves of *our clothing* to give it to him? And yet he tells us, that he is in effect with with us *in his poor members;* and we invent a thousand cold excuses for neglecting to assist him, and send our compassionate Saviour away empty. Is this the temper of a Christian? Is this the temper in which we should wish to be found at the judgment-day?

44, 45 But *we know not Christ* in this disguise. Neither did these unhappy creatures *on the left hand* know him: they are surprised to be told of such a thing; and yet are represented as perishing for it. Away therefore with all *those religious hopes*, (vainly so called,) which leave the heart hardened, and the hand contracted from good works! *If we shut up the bowels of compassion from our brethren, how dwelleth the love of God in us?* (1 John iii. 17.) Or to what doth the *love of Christ constrain us*, if it be not to the exercise of gratitude to him, and the offices of cheerful and active friendship to those whom he now owns as *his brethren*, and whom he will not be ashamed to call so in the midst of his highest triumph? *Blessed Jesus*, how munificent art thou! and what a fund of *charity* didst thou lay up in the very words which are now before us! In all ages since they were spoken, how many *hungry* hast thou *fed*, how many *naked* hast thou *clothed*, how many calamitous creatures hast thou *relieved* by them! May they be written deep in our hearts, that the joy with which we shall finally meet thee, may be increased by the happy effect of this day's meditation!

SECT. CLXVII.

The Jewish rulers consult how they might take Christ, and Judas agrees with them to deliver him privately into their hands. Mat. XXVI. 1—5. 14—16. Mark XIV. 1, 2, 10, 11. Luke XXI. 37, *to the end.* XXII. 1—6.

LUKE XXI. 37.

LUKE XXI. 37. AND in the daytime he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.

THUS our Lord ended his discourses on this subject on the third day of the week in which he suffered; *and* thus he was generally employed from the time of his public entry into Jerusalem, to his last passover: *he was teaching by day in the temple, and at night he went out* of the city, *and lodged at the mount called* [*the mount*] *of Olives*, in the neighbourhood of which Bethany lay; in the retirement of which, particularly in the garden of Gethsemane, he often spent a considerable part of the night; being desirous to secure that only season of solitude, that he might prepare himself for his approaching sufferings by a proper series of extraordinary devotion. And as soon as it was light, he returned to the city; *and all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, that they might* thus lay hold of every opportunity to *hear him;* and he was solicitous not to lose any time that might be improved for so profitable a purpose. SECT. CLXVII. Luke XXI. 37 38

38 and all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

LUKE XXII. 1. Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover [*and*] was after two days. [Mark xiv. 1.—]

Now it may not be improper here to observe, that *the feast of unleavened bread, which was* commonly *called the passover, drew near,* [*and*] *was* celebrated within *two days after* our Lord had delivered the prophecies and admonitions so largely recorded above.[a] Luke xxii. 1

MAT. XXVI. 1. And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man

And it came to pass, that *when Jesus had finished all these discourses,* and the appointed hour for his sufferings was now at hand, *he said to his disciples, Ye know that after two days the passover cometh; and* in the plainest terms I now assure you *the Son of man is* then to be *betrayed* to his inveterate enemies, that, according to Mat. xxvi. 1 2

[a] *Two days after.*] I apprehend that the preceding discourses (from sect. cli.) were delivered on the Tuesday of the week in which he suffered; and he probably uttered the following words that evening, which was just two days before the paschal lamb was eaten.—I do not find that any of the transactions of the Wednesday are recorded besides the general account given above.

SECT. CLXVII. Mat. XXVI. 2

what I have often told you, (Mat. xvi. 21. and xx. 18, 19.) he may be put into the hands of sinful men *to be crucified:* prepare yourselves therefore for that trying season, that you may not be hurried into any thing which you may afterwards have reason to repent.

is betrayed to be crucified.

3 *Then* that very evening *the chief priests* of every class, *and* others employed in distinguished services in the temple, together with *the scribes, and the* other *elders of the people,* who were members of the grand sanhedrim, *assembled together,* not indeed in the temple, where they usually met, but *at the palace of the high-priest, who was* then *called Caiaphas;* (as was observed before, John xi. 49, p. 252.) *And* there *they* entered into a secret conspiracy, and *consulted how they might* privately *take Jesus by* some *artifice,* without giving an alarm to his friends, *and* might *put him to death* as soon as possible, which one way or other they were determined to do. *But they* had such an apprehension of his interest in the people, that some of them were rather for delaying it, and *said,* It will be more advisable to wait till after the passover, and *not* to attempt to seize him *at the feast,* while there is such a concourse in the city from all parts; *lest* the design that we have formed against him should be discovered, and considering how popular he is, *there should be a tumult* raised *among the people,* either to rescue him from our hands, or to revenge his death. Such were the cautious sentiments of some among them; *for they feared the people;* but others pushed the matter on with greater forwardness and zeal, and were by no means for deferring it; to which at length the rest agreed, upon finding a more favourable opportunity than they expected, offering itself through the treachery of Judas.

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high-priest, who was called Caiaphas, [Mark xiv. 1.—xxi. 2.—]

4 And consulted [how] they might take Jesus by subtilty, [and put him to death.] [Mark xiv. 1. Luke xxii. 2.—]

5 But they said, Not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people: [Luke, for they feared the people;] Mark xiv. 2. Luke xxii.—2.]

Luke xxii. 3

For *then,* just at that very juncture of time, *Satan,* by Divine permission, *entered into Judas, who was also called Iscariot, and was* (as we observed before) *one of the number of the twelve* apostles who were chosen by our Lord from the rest of his disciples to the most honourable trust as well as the most endearing intima-

Luke xxii. Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being [one] of the number of the twelve: [Mat. xxvi. 14. Mark xiv. 10.—]

SECT. CLXVII.

cy:[b] and as this malignant spirit had before suggested to him the horrid design of betraying his Master, he now strongly impressed his mind that during his retirement he might easily find a convenient time for executing it, and might be sure of being well rewarded for it by the rulers of the Jews. *And*, under this impression, *he* immediately *went away* from Christ and his company to the house of Caiaphas, whom he knew to be a most inveterate enemy to his master; *and* having found means of introducing himself, and communicating his general design, he *conversed with the chief priests and captains* of the temple, who were not yet gone away, and deliberated *how he might* with the greatest convenience and security *betray him unto them*. *And* as the sordid wretch proposed it with a covetous view, before he would come to any agreement with them, *he said*, without the least appearance of shame or remorse, *What are you willing to give me, and I will* undertake to *deliver him to you* at a time and place in which you may effectually secure him without the danger of giving any alarm to the people?

And when they heard his proposal, they thought [*it*] very practicable; and *they were glad* of so unexpected an offer from one of his own disciples to facilitate their measures; *and* therefore readily *promised* in general *to give him* a sum of *money*, as a reward for that service; *and* at last *they* expressly *agreed with him for thirty pieces of silver*,[c] which was the price to be paid for a slave who had been slain, (see Exod. xxi. 32:) and as they proposed it to express their contempt of Jesus, so God permitted Judas, covetous as he was, to acquiesce in that mean and trifling sum, (though he might easily have raised it higher,) that thus the prophecy might be fulfilled in which it had been particularly specified. (See Zech. xi. 12, 13.)

Luke XXII. 3

4 And he went his way and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them: [Mat. xxvi. —14. Mark xiv. 10.]

Mat. XXVI. 15. —And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?

Mat. xxvi. 15

Mark XIV. 11. —And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. [And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.] [Mat. xxvi.—15. Luke xxii. 5.]

Mark xiv. 11

[b] *One of the number of the twelve*, &c.] This was a circumstance of such high aggravation, that it is observable, each of the evangelists hath marked it out in this view. Compare with these places John vi. 71. Vol. I. p. 458.

[c] *Thirty pieces of silver.*] A slave was rated by the law at thirty shekels of silver, which, if we reckon them at half a crown (which is supposed to have been about their real value,) amounted to no more than three pounds fifteen shillings of our money; a goodly price that he was prized at of them. Zech. xi. 13.

SECT. CLXVII. Luke XXII. 6.

And he promised to take a punctual care in the affair; *and* accordingly *from that time* he diligently *sought* a proper *opportunity to betray him unto them*, that they might come upon him privately, and apprehend him *in the absence of the multitude:* nor was it long before this happened, as we shall quickly relate in its place.

Luke XXII. 6. And he promised, and [from that time] sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude. [Mat. xxvi. 16. Mark xiv.—11.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxi. 37, 38

WE see with what unremitting vigour the great *author and finisher of our faith* pressed forward *towards the mark*, and how he quickened his pace, as he *saw the day approaching;* spending in devotion the greatest part of *the night*, which succeeded to his most laborious days, and resuming his work *early in the morning!* How much happier were *his disciples* in these early lectures, than the slumbers of the morning could have made them on their beds! Let us not scruple to deny ourselves the indulgence of unnecessary sleep, that we may come *morning after morning* to place ourselves at his feet, and lose no opportunity of receiving the instructions of his word, and seeking those of his Spirit.

Mat. xxvi. 3, 4, 14, 15

But while his gracious heart was thus intent on doing good, *the chief priests and rulers of the people* were no less intent on mischief and murder. They *took counsel together how they might put him to death:* They set upon his head the *price of a slave*, and find *an apostle* base enough to accept it. Blush, *O ye heavens*, to have been witness to this; and be ashamed, *O earth*, to have supported so infamous a creature! Yet this was the man who but a few days before was the foremost to appear as an *advocate for the poor*, and to censure the pious zeal of Mary, which our Lord vindicated and applauded. (John xii. 4—8, p. 276, 277.) Let the fatal proofs of his covetous disposition, instigated by *Satan*, be marked with abhorrence and terror; and if we see this base principle harboured in the breasts of those who call themselves the *disciples and ministers of Christ*, let us not wonder, if by God's righteous judgment they are given up to those excesses of it which bring upon them lasting infamy and endless perdition.

Luke xxii. 3, 4, 6

SECT. CLXVIII.

Christ, having directed his disciples where to prepare the passover for him, comes to Jerusalem for the last time before his death, and sits down with them to the celebration of it. [Mat. XXVI. 17—20. Mark XIV. 12—17. Luke XXII. 7—18. John XIII. 1.

LUKE XXII. 7.

NOW after this infamous bargain which Judas made with the chief priests to betray

LUKE XXII. 7. THEN came the

[first] day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed. [Mat. xxvi. 17.—Mark xiv. 12.]

into their hands his innocent and Divine Master, on the fifth day of the week, before the even- SECT. CLXVIII. ing when *the first day of unleavened bread came*,[a] *in which*, according to the precept of the law, Luke XXII. 7. which had expressly limited the time of it, *the passover must be killed*, or the paschal lamb be slain, in commemoration of the Israelites being preserved from the destroying angel, and delivered out of Egypt, Jesus determined to keep the passover with his disciples. *And*, that he might in a due manner celebrate it with them, *he sent two of his disciples, Peter and John*, from the place where he had spent the night before in retirement with them, *and said, Go* to Jerusalem, *and prepare the passover for us, that we may* once more *eat* [*it*] together.

8 And he sent [two of his disciples,] Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat. [Mark xiv. 13.—]

8

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we [Mark, go and] prepare [for thee to eat the passover?] [Mat. xxvi.—17. Mark xiv.—12.]

And they said unto him, Lord, we are ready to perform the charge, and that we may be under no uncertainty as to the place, only desire thou wouldest particularly tell us, *Where*, or at what house *wilt thou have us go and prepare for thy eating the passover* with us.

9

10 And he said unto them, [Go into the city to such a man, *and*] behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. [Mat. xxvi. 18.—Mark xiv. —13.]

And he said unto them, I will give you a sign, which shall put the matter out of doubt: *Go* directly *into the city to such a one* as I will point out to you: [*and*] *behold, as soon as* ever *you are entered into the city, a man will meet you* in the street *carrying a pitcher of water* in his hand; *follow him* immediately *into the house where he enters;* for I know it will be a place very fit for our accommodation.[b]

10

11 And [Mark, wheresoever he shall

And wheresoever he

11

[a] *The first day of unleavened bread came.*] There is no room to question that the time when Christ sent his disciples to prepare the passover was on the Thursday of the week in which he suffered; and though the first day of unleavened bread, most strictly so called, was the fifteenth day of Nisan, and began with the evening that the passover was eaten, yet it is not improbable, that the evangelists might sometimes speak according to the usual way of reckoning days among other nations; and so, as the use of leaven among them was to cease by sun-set at farthest, and they were obliged to eat their supper, which was the chief meal, with unleavened cakes, it might naturally enough be called by this name.

[b] *A man will meet you*, &c.] As Samuel having anointed Saul, for the confirmation of his faith gave him several predictions relating to some very contingent occurrences he was to meet with in his journey, (see 1 Sam. x. 2—7.) so our Lord seems by these predictions to have intended the same with regard to his disciples, and also to give them a most important hint, that he foresaw all the particular circumstances which were to befal him at Jerusalem when he went up thither for the next and last time before his sufferings.—The sending them to Jerusalem in this manner seems to intimate, that he did not go thither himself that morning, so that it is very probable he spent most of the day in retirement for meditation and prayer.

SECT. CLXVIII. Luke XXII.

goes in, you shall say to the master of the family, We are come to thee with a message from Jesus *the Teacher*; and he *says to thee*, by us, *my time is* now very *near*,[c] and before I make my last remove *I will celebrate the passover at thy house: where* then *is the dining-room?* or what convenient chamber hast thou to spare, *where I may* come and *eat the passover with my disciples*, and be secure from the interruption of any other company? *And* upon this *he will* take you up stairs, and *shew you a large upper room*, which will conveniently hold us all; and you will find it *furnished* with all proper utensils, *and prepared* by all necessary circumstances of purification of every kind, so as to be, on the whole, in very good order: *there* provide the unleavened bread, the lamb, and the bitter herbs, and *make* all things *ready for us* against the time of our coming; for we shall be able to find the house without any direction from you.[d]

go in] ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, [My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house,] where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples? [Mat. xxvi. —18. Mark xiv. 14.]

12 And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished [and prepared:] there make ready [for us.] [Mark xiv. 15.]

Mark xiv. 16.

And after he had given these particular instructions to *his* two *disciples*, they *went out* from thence, *and came into the city, and found* the man carrying the water, whom they followed into a house, where there was, just *as he had said to them*, a commodious dining-room at liberty, and well furnished: *and* as the master of the house was free to let them have it, *they did as Jesus had appointed them, and made the passover ready* against the time when he should come to eat it.

MARK XIV. 16. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them; and they [did as Jesus had appointed them,] and made ready the passover. [Mat. xxvi. 19. Luke xxii. 13.]

17 *And in the evening when the* proper *hour* for eating the passover *was come, he came* directly to the house where his messengers were, *and sat down* to the table *with* all *the twelve apostles* around him, to taste (according to the usage

17 And in the evening [Luke, when the hour was come,] he cometh, [*and* sat down] with the twelve [Luke, apostles.] [Mat. xxvi.

[c] *My time is near.*] Every body knew that the time for eating the passover was near; for that these words must be supposed to have a farther view. And I am therefore ready to believe, that the owner of this house, to whom our Lord sent this message by the name of the teacher, might be a person who, (though unknown to Peter and John) was in his heart at least a disciple of Christ; and our Lord might give this intimation, that it was to be a time of more than ordinary importance to him, that it might be some secret support to this man's faith under that violent shock it was soon to receive by his approaching sufferings.

[d] We shall be able to find the house, &c.] The same prophetic gift which enabled Christ to predict these circumstances, would, no doubt, guide him thither; and it is a beautiful modesty in the sacred historian only to hint obliquely at it: but I apprehend it the part of a paraphrast to set these particulars in a fuller and stronger light.

20. Luke xxii. 14.] JOHN XIII. 1. Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come, that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

of those days) the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs, before the lamb was served up.[e] SECT. CLXVIII.

Now it is here to be observed, that *before* he began to eat *the feast of the passover, as Jesus knew that his hour was come when he should depart from this* calamitous *world,* in which he had sojourned for a while, to return *to the* bosom of the *Father* in which he originally dwelt, he was solicitous to order every circumstance of his conduct in this last intercourse with his disciples, so as might most effectually promote their edification and comfort, and make it clearly manifest, that *having* always tenderly *loved his own that were in the world, he loved them* in the most perfect manner, even *to the end* of his life,[f] and would decline nothing which might be for their advantage. John XIII. 1

LUKE XXII. 15. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with

And, to express the fervency and strength of this affection, *he said to them,* as they sat together, before supper was brought in, I assure you that *I have most earnestly desired to eat this passover with you,* though I know it will be the Luke XXII. 15.

[e] *To taste the unleavened bread, &c.*] I must here entreat my reader, if he has an opportunity, to consult Ainsworth's excellent Note on Exod. xii. 8, where he has collected from authentic Jewish writers the best account I have any where seen in so little room, of the various ceremonies with which the passover was eaten, by which the subsequent story is greatly illustrated. Among others, the following circumstances should be recollected:—That the master of the family began the feast with a cup of wine, which, having solemnly b'essed, that is, having adored the name of God over it, he divided among the guests, (Luke xxii. 17.) and afterwards washed his hands:—Then the supper began with the unleavened bread and bitter herbs, which, when the master and the rest of the company had tasted, one of the younger persons present, generally a child, asked the reason of what was peculiar in that feast, (according to Exod. xii. 26. which introduced the haggadah, that is, the shewing forth, or declaration of it; (in allusion to which we read of *shewing forth the Lord's death,* 1 Cor. xi. 26.)—Then the master rose up and took another cup, and washed his hands again, before the lamb was tasted; and in this interval, I suppose, Christ also washed the feet of his disciples—Then, after eating the passover, followed another cup, which, after having delivered to each a piece of bread, was the sacramental cup at this supper:—Then after some pious and friendly discourse, the whole family, after having drank at least a fourth cup, sang some psalms of praise: and so the solemnity ended.—Agreeable to this is the account given in the Religious Ceremonies of all Nations, Vol. I. p. 215—217.

[f] *He loved them to the end.*] I shall in the next section hint at my reasons for agreeing with those critics who place the story of Christ washing his disciples' feet at the beginning of the paschal supper, rather than a night or two before.—At present, I would only observe, that this verse seems intended by John to introduce, not merely the story which immediately follows it, but the whole account of Christ's behaviour to his friends in these last scenes of his life: and therefore as he prefixes it to the first circumstance that he has mentioned of this passover, I apprehend it proper to begin the whole story with it; especially since the words which I have placed next after it, are full of that love which he expressed to them even to the last.

SECT. CLXVIII. Luke XXII. 15

last I shall celebrate with you, and we shall rise from it but a few hours *before I* am to *suffer* from mine enemies the most cruel insults, and torments, which shall end in my death; yet such is my love to my people, and such my desire to glorify my heavenly Father, that no passover was ever so welcome to me as this:

you before I suffer.

16 *For* now I see the days of my humiliation almost finished; and *I say unto you, That* after this *I will not* celebrate any other passover with you, nor *eat of it any more, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God*, or till the institutions of the gospel shall have perfected those of the law, and the ordinances of both are superseded by the more perfect enjoyments of the heavenly world.

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 *And* then, *having received the cup*, with which it was usual for them to begin the feast, *he gave thanks* to God for the redemption of Israel, in commemoration of which the passover was instituted, and for giving them this opportunity of celebrating this holy banquet together; *and* then *said, Take this* cup, and let it go round, *and divide* [*it*] *among yourselves*, and bless the

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves.

18 God of your fathers. And see that you do it with a devotion suitable to the distinguished solemnity which you have now before you: *for I say unto you, That* after what passes this evening, *I will not drink* any more with you *of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God come*, and that complete and spiritual redemption, which is typified by this ordinance, shall be fulfilled and perfected.

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxii. 10—13

WE may well assure ourselves, that the same divine penetration and prophetic discernment, which enabled the blessed Jesus thus circumstantially to *foretel* to his disciples those most *contingent occurrences* which were to determine *the place* where they should *prepare the passover*, would also open to him a prospect of all that was to follow. All the scenes that were to be passed through on this fatal night, and the succeeding black and bloody day, were no doubt attentively viewed: the *agony* of the *garden*, the traitorous *kiss* of *Judas*, the cowardly *flight* of all the other *apostles*, the *insults* of his seemingly victorious and successful *enemies*, the clamorous *accusations*, the insolent *buffetings*, the *scourges*, the *thorns*, the *nails*, the *cross*, and all that he

was to endure upon it from the hand of God and men. Yet behold, with all these in his view, he goes on with a holy alacrity, and *this sun of righteousness rejoiceth as a champion to run his race!* (Psal. xix. 5.) Yea, when he is sitting down to the *paschal supper* (though therein was exhibited, in a most lively emblem, the bitterness of his own sufferings,) he utters these gracious and emphatical words, *With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.* SECT. CLXVIII. Ver. 15

So justly might it be said of him, as we see it is, that *having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* O blessed *Jesus*, may the ardour, the courage, and the permanency of our *love to thee*, bear at least some little proportion to that wherewith thou hast condescended to *love us!* May we long, from time to time, to celebrate with thee that *Christian passover* which thou hast ordained to succeed the *Jewish*, as the memorial of thy sacrifice! Yea, may we long for the last solemnity of this kind, which will ere long come, after which we *shall no more drink* with thee *of the fruit of the vine, till it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God!* In the mean time may we be cheered with *thy love*, which is indeed far *better than wine* (Cant. i. 3;) and, thus supported with those reviving cordials which thy gospel administers, may we *keep ourselves in the love of God, and in the patient expectation of thy final*, most glorious, and welcome *appearance!* (2 Thess. iii. 5; and Jude, ver. 21.) John xiii. 1 Luke xxii. 16, 18

SECT. CLXIX.

Christ rebukes the ambition which his disciples most unseasonably expressed as they were sitting down to supper, by washing their feet, and adding several excellent admonitions to the exercise of humility, immediately before the eating of the paschal lamb. Luke XXII. 24—27. John XIII. 2—3—17.

JOHN XIII. 2.—AND supper being ended,—

JOHN XIII. 2.—

NOW when our Lord had thus sat down to eat the passover with his disciples (as was said before,) *supper being come,*[a] and the ante-

[a] *Supper being come.*] The reasons brought by Bishop Kidder (in his Demonstration of the Messiah, part iii. chap. 3, p. 60, 61,) by Dr. Lightfoot (Hor. Heb. on Mat. xxvi. 6,) and since by Dr. Whitby (in his Notes on this place,) to prove that this supper was not the passover, but another supper at Bethany a night or two before, I have briefly obviated in the paraphrase or notes on the places on which they are grounded, and therefore cannot think it material to trouble the reader with a particular detail of them. The chief reasons which determine me to the contrary opinion (besides some others, of which a good summary is given in Dr. Guyse's valuable Note on this place) are these: such a disposition of the story best suits several of the circumstances of the paschal supper, (particularly the con-

SECT. CLXIX.

Luke XXII. 24

past or introduction to it having been dispatched, as above; Just in the interval between that and the serving up the paschal lamb, *there was a* most unseasonable *contention among them*,[b] as they sat at table with Jesus, *which of them should be accounted the greatest* in that kingdom of which he had been speaking, and which they interpreted of a temporal dominion that should succeed his approaching sufferings. (Compare Mark ix. 34, and Luke ix. 46, p. 18.)

LUKE XXII. 24. There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

John xiii. 3

[*And*] upon this, *though Jesus knew that the Father*, by the sure engagements of an immutable covenant, *had given* the government of *all things into his hands*, and was just going actually to invest him with all power both in heaven and upon earth; *and that, as he came forth from God* as his Messenger to men; so *he was returning to God* again; yet, conscious as he was of so great a dignity, he was nevertheless willing to give his disciples an example of the deepest humility in this his last interview with them before his pas-

JOHN XIII. 3. [*And*] Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God,

tention about superiority, and the inquiry about Judas, both which must, on the other hypothesis, have been superseded;) and the propriety of it is especially evinced from John xiii. 38, where our Lord says to Peter, *The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice*; which must be spoken the very *night Jesus was betrayed*, and yet is so connected with this story of washing the disciples' feet, by ver. 21 and ver. 31, that they cannot without great violence be separated: and it is certain, John xiii. 1, will have a peculiar energy according to this plan; which therefore most critics have followed.—The reader will observe here, that I have rendered δειπνου γενομενου, *supper being come*, which is the sense in which the word is often used elsewhere: thus John xxi. 4, πρωιας γενομενης, is *when morning was come*; Acts xii. 18; xvi. 35, ἡμερας γενομενης, *when day was come*; and Acts xxi. 40, σιγης γενομενης, *when silence was made*: in all which places, and in many more that might easily be collected from the Greek writers, it would be absurd to translate the word *ended*. Nay, Luke iv. 42, γενομενης ἡμερας, signifies *when the day was coming on*. (Compare Mark i. 35, note, Vol. I. p. 204.) It is indeed an ambiguous term; but the rendering above is here to be preferred, (1.) Because it was much more natural to wash the feet of guests before than after supper. (2.) Because it is expressly said, in ver. 1, to have been done before the passover; which, if the preceding reason be admitted, determines the point. (3.) Because part of the discourse, which John mentions as happening after the feet were washed, is mentioned by the other evangelists as passing at supper; nay, John himself, when he speaks, in ver. 26, of Christ's dipping the sop, and giving it to Judas after this, plainly shews that supper was not ended.—As the latter part of this 2d verse comes in by way of parenthesis, I have transposed that clause, and inserted it afterwards in ver. 21, to introduce what relates to Judas in the next section; a freedom which will, I hope, be easily excused.

[b] *There was a contention among them*] If the reasoning above be allowed, we must certainly transpose Luke's account of this contention about superiority; for none can imagine it should follow immediately after Christ had been giving them so affecting a lesson of humility. But Luke seems less exact in the order of this story than the other evangelists; and particularly relates what passed concerning the person that was to betray him after the Eucharist; though both Matthew and Mark place it before.

SECT. CLXIX.

John XIII. 4.

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded himself.

sion: With this design, and in order to shame them out of that ambitious contention which he observed among them, in a more forcible manner than any words alone could do, *he riseth from supper;*[c] *and* whereas it was only usual for the head of the family at such a time to wash his own hands, he *lays aside his* upper-*garments, and taking a towel, tied it round him* like a kind of apron: *And then pouring water into a* large *ewer*, or sort of cistern commonly used on these occasions, *he began* himself *to wash the feet of* [*his*] *disciples, and to wipe* [*them*], after they were thus washed, *with the* long ends of the *linen cloth with which he was girded*, which hung down to his feet.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Then, when he had done with those who sat nearest to him, *he comes to Simon Peter:* and offering to do the like for him, [*Peter*] was so affected at his condescending to perform such a mean office, that he *says to him, Lord dost thou* go about to *wash my feet?* It is a thousand times fitter that I should wash thine; nor can I bear to see thee demean thyself thus. *Jesus answered and said to him, Thou knowest not now* the design of *what I am doing, but thou shalt know hereafter;* and as I shall presently explain the meaning of this action, so the time will quickly come, when many other things in mine undertaking and conduct, much more mysterious than this, shall be cleared up to thee. Yet still *Peter* refused, and *said to him*, with more warmth than before, Lord, whatever be the intent of the action, I cannot suffer it by any

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto

[c] *He riseth from supper.*] As it is here asserted that *Christ rose from supper*, we must allow that, in some sense, *supper was begun*, that is, as I suppose, the antepast had been taken, which is mentioned by the Jews as preceding the *paschal lamb:* see Ainsworth's note, quoted above note [e], p. 432.) They tell us that it was then usual for the master of the family to wash his hands; and, if I am rightly informed, the Jews continue the custom still.—This seems a more natural manner of explaining the clause before us, than to suppose, with Grotius, or Vossius, (Harm. Evan. lib. i. cap. 13, sect. 1.) or Dr. Edwards, (Exercit. on Luke xxii. 21.) that after the paschal lamb they eat another distinct supper, and that this washing happened in the interval between them. Though Vossius is pleased to call this a *very little lamb, (unus Agniculus,)* I cannot but think (especially considering how early the ewes yean in Judea,) that it might be big enough plentifully to sup thirteen people; and as all which remained uneaten till morning was to be burnt, (Exod. xii. 10.) one cannot suppose that our Lord would be inclined to multiply dishes on this occasion, especially as the former part of the night was to be spent in watching and prayer.

SECT. CLXIX. John XIII. 8.

means, and I am determined *thou shalt never wash my feet.* But *Jesus answered him,* Alas, Peter, that was rashly spoken; for there is a sense in which, *if I do not wash thee, thou hast no portion with me;* intimating thereby, that if he were not cleansed from sin by his blood and Spirit, he could never partake of the happiness of his people; and that, in the mean time, it became him to submit in this instance to his direction. Upon which, *Simon Peter,* struck with so awful an admonition, immediately *says to him,* with that eager affection so natural to his temper, *Lord,* if this washing is to be a token of my interest in thee, I most gladly acquiesce in it, and am heartily desirous that thou shouldst wash, *not my feet only, but also my hands and my head* too; for I desire that all my intellectual and all my executive powers may be sanctified by thy grace, and be entirely devoted to thy service.

him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and my head.

10 Then *Jesus,* willing to lay hold on a hint which gave him an opportunity of pursuing so useful a thought, *says* further *to him, He that* is washed already, or that *has* just *been bathing*[d], *needs only to wash his feet,* which may indeed easily be soiled by the shortest walk, *and* when that is done, he *is entirely clean;* as if he should have said, The truly good man needs not that deep repentance and universal change which is absolutely necessary to others, though he should, by renewed acts of penitence and faith, be cleansing himself from smaller pollutions, which are in some degree inseparable from the infirmity of human nature: *and,* in this sense, I know that *you,* my apostles, *are clean; but* yet I must add, You are *not all* so. *For* as he was acquainted with the secret dispositions of their hearts, so *he knew who would betray him;* (compare John vi. 64, Vol. I. p. 457.) and *therefore he said, You are not all clean,*[e] because he knew the heart

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed, needeth not, save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

[d] *He that has been bathing.*] This rendering of the word λελουμενος is confirmed by Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 337, 338,) and gives as it were a compendious paraphrase upon it. Clarius has well observed that as the αποδυτηριον, or room in which they dressed themselves after bathing, was different from that in which they bathed, the feet might be so soiled in walking from one to the other, as to make it necessary immediately to wash them again.

[e] *You are not all clean.*] Some have observed that Judas did not decline the honour of having his feet washed by Christ, though Peter did; and have considered

of Judas was polluted with reigning sin, and was so far enslaved under the power of the devil as to have consented to the perpetration of the vilest wickedness. SECT. CLXIX.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

When therefore he had thus *washed their feet, and had taken his* upper-*garments* and put them on, *he sat down* at the table *again, and said to them, Do you know* the meaning and design of *what I have* now *been doing to you* in the form of a servant? John XIII. 12.

Luke XXII. 25. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them, are called benefactors.

And, to explain the matter, *he said to them*, I must again remind you of what I formerly told you, but what you seem so ready to forget, (see Mat. xx. 25, 26, and Mark x. 42, 43, p. 260.) *The kings of the Gentiles* do indeed *lord it over them; and they that exercise* the most magisterial and arbitrary *authority upon them have* a set of flatterers about them who encourage them in it, as an instance of true greatness of mind, and give them *the* vain *title of* grand *benefactors* to nations and men.[f] Luke ixx. 25.

26 But ye *shall* not *be so*: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

But you, my disciples, [*shall*] *not* [*do*] *thus;* for you are to shew yourselves the friends of the world, not by governing, but by serving: be not ambitious therefore in contending for superiority, *but let him who is eldest among you be as* humble and obliging as if he were *the youngest* and most dependent of all;[g] *and he that presides* over the rest in any office of peculiar trust and influence, [*let him be*] as humble and condescending *as a servant.* 26

27 For whether *is*

Of this I have now been giving you an instance, which surely you cannot quickly forget: *for which* of the two *is* naturally accounted *greater* by a 27

it as an instance of his pride. But if the discourse between Christ and Peter happened before he came to Judas, it had been indecent for Judas to renew an objection which had just been thus overruled: and if Christ came to Judas before Peter, he might be unwilling to be the first to dispute the point, lest Christ should confound him, by inquiring whether he declined it from a consciousness of any peculiar unworthiness. Guilt naturally suggests such suspicions and precautions.

[f] *Have the title of benefactors.*] It is indeed possible that our Lord may here refer to the title of εὐεργέται, given to some of the Ptolemies and Seleucidæ, or to the ambiguity of the Hebrew word נְדִיבִים, which (as Beza has observed,) signifies both *princes* and *benefactors:* but the general sense given in the paraphrase seems to me much more probable, especially on comparing it with the Syriac version, where there is no such ambiguity, though one would most of all have expected it.

[g] *Who is eldest among you*, &c.] As μείζων is here opposed to νεώτερος, *the youngest*, I render it *eldest*, as it is rendered Rom. ix. 12. See Gen. xxv. 23; 1 Sam. xvii. 14, Septuag. and compare 1 Kings ii. 22.

SECT. CLXIX.

Luke XXII. 27

stranger who happens to come in, *he that sits at the table, or he that* stands and *waits* upon the guests? *Is* it *not* evident that it must be *he that sits at the table? But I am among you as one that waits* on the rest; and you have just now seen me putting on the form of a servant, and performing to you while you sat at the table one of the lowest offices of menial attendants,[h] in the very garb and posture in which any of them could appear. *You call me* indeed your *Teacher and Lord; and* therein *you say well; for* [*so*] *I am*, and such authority have I received of my Father. *If therefore I*, who am [*your*] *Lord* and Master, *and* whom you know to be a divinely inspired *Teacher*, have condescended to so mean an office, and *have* thus *washed your feet*, and in all other instances have shewn my readiness in love to serve you, surely *you also ought to wash one another's feet* and should be ready to submit to all the humblest offices of mutual friendship. *For I have* in this instance *given you an example, that as I have done to you, you also should do*, on all proper occasions to one another.[i] And to engage you to the like humanity, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*, as I have formerly said, (Luke vi. 48, and Mat. x. 24, Vol. I. p. 305, 415.) *The servant is not greater than his Lord, nor* is *the messenger greater than he that sent him;* it will therefore very ill become you to disdain any thing which I have not disdained. These are plain instructions, but remember

greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

John xiii. 13.

John XIII. 13. Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.
14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you.
16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know

[h] Performing one of the lowest offices, &c.] This was so to a proverb. See 1 Sam. xxv. 41, and Grotius in loc.—Dr. Evans well observes, (Christian Temper, Vol. I. p. 81.) that our Lord chose this kind office, though not absolutely necessary in itself, more strongly to impress the minds of his disciples, and to shew that they ought to regard, not only the necessary preservation, but the mutual comfort of each other.

[i] *I have given you an example*, &c.] Some have understood these words as ordaining this to be a continued rite among Christians; and Barclay insists in his Apology, (p. 457—470,) that this ceremony of washing the feet has as much to recommend it for a standing ordinance of the gospel, as either baptism or the breaking of bread. But though some anciently conceived the practice of it to be thus enjoined, (See Dr. Cave's Primitive Christianity, book ii. chap. 14.) and the Moravian churches still retain it; yet as no such rite as this has ever generally prevailed in the Christian world, and as in many places and circumstances it would be an inconvenience rather than a kindness to do it for our friends, I cannot think these words of our Lord, so plainly capable of another sense, are to be interpreted with so much strictness. See Itigii. Dissert. de Pedilavio, &c.—Into what a farce this is turned at Rome on some occasions may be seen in the Religious Ceremonies of all Nations, Vol. I. p. 417.

these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

they are capable of being improved to the noblest practical purposes; and *if* indeed *you know these things*, and form a right conception of them, *you are happy if you practise them*; for nothing will conduce more to your honour and comfort than an obedient regard to my instructions and example, especially in all the instances of humility and condescension; but if you neglect to act agreeably to them, your seeing them, and hearing them, will be worse than in vain.

SECT. CLXIX. John XIII. 17

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT a mournful reflection is it, that corrupt nature should still prevail so far, even in the hearts of such pious men as the *apostles* in the main were, that after so long a converse with *Christ* they should still be so unlike him, and bring their eager *contentions about superiority*, in a state of temporal grandeur they were never to see, into the last hours they spent with their Master, and even to one of the most holy and solemn *ordinances* of religion! Such are the vain dreams of *ambition*, and with such empty shadows does it amuse the deluded mind. Luke xxii. 24.

But let us turn our eyes to him whom we justly *call* our *Teacher* and our *Lord*; for surely, if any thing can effect a cure, it must be actions and words like these. The great *Heir of all things*, invested with universal dominion, and *just returning to his heavenly Father* to undertake the administration of it: in what a *habit*, in what an *attitude*, do we see him! Whom would a stranger have taken for the *lowest* of the company, but him who was *high* over all created nature? Blessed Jesus, it was not so much any personal attachment to these thy servants, as a regard to the edification of thy whole church, which engaged thee to this astonishing action; that all thy ministers, that all thy people, in conformity to thy example, might learn a readiness to *serve each other* in love! John xiii. 13, 14 3 4, 5 15

But why are we so slow to receive this lesson! And why is our practice often so contrary to it! Surely to cleanse us from these dregs of pride and carnality, we need in a spiritual sense to be *washed* by him. Let us gladly submit to that *washing*, if we desire to secure *any part in him*. Which of us in this view may not see reason to cry out with *Peter*, *Lord*, *not* our *feet only*, *but also* our *hands and* our *head!* May our whole nature be thus purified! and, warmly emulous of conforming to so bright an *example*, may we ever be maintaining a watchfulness over our own spirits; correcting the first appearances of irregularity, and washing away every slightest stain which our *feet* may contract in this various journey! So shall we be *great*, in the sight and favour of our Master; and, numbering ourselves among Luke xxii. 26

8 9 10

SECT. CLXIX. the *least* of his *servants*, shall be distinguished by peculiar honours, in proportion to the degree in which we think ourselves most unworthy of them.

SECT. CLXX.

Christ, while they are eating the paschal lamb, declares that one of his apostles should betray him, and at length marks out Judas as the person, who upon this retires with a resentment which confirmed him in that fatal purpose. Mat. XXVI. 21—25. Mark XIV. 18—21. Luke XXII. 21—23, 28—30. John XIII.—2, 18—30

LUKE XXII. 28.

SECT. CLXX. Luke XXII. 28 THEN Jesus went on, as he was eating the passover, to instruct, admonish, and comfort his disciples, by a series of most wise and pious discourse; and said, Depend upon it, you will find that humble and benevolent temper which I have recommended to you the way to the highest honours, if you have patience to wait the proper time; for as *ye are they who have continued* faithfully and affectionately *with me in* all *my trials* and afflictions; So by a sacred and inviolable covenant *I appoint unto you a kingdom*,[a] and solemnly engage myself to bestow it upon you, *even as my Father has appointed* a kingdom *unto me*, and is quickly about to raise me to it. Now the exalted honours which I shall there receive are incomparably beyond those about which you seem so solicitous; let me therefore awaken a nobler ambition in your minds, while I assure you *that you may* expect to *eat and drink at my table in* that *my kingdom*, or to be treated as my distin-

LUKE XXII. 28. YE are they which have continued with me in my temptations:

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my king-

[a] *I appoint unto you a kingdom.*] It is well known that the word διατίθεμαι properly signifies *to covenant*; or to *bestow in virtue of a covenant*; and therefore the last clause of this verse may probably refer to what divines commonly call *the covenant of redemption*, to which there are so many references in scripture, and concerning the reality of which we could have no doubt if the references were not so express; considering, on the one hand, the great importance of that undertaking of our Lord's to which it refers: and, on the other, the plain declarations of those prophecies which his Spirit suggested, and the confidence with which he has promised those blessings which, as Mediator, it empowers him to bestow. It is therefore astonishing, that any should treat it as the creature of a systematic brain.—For the engagements in it on Christ's part, see Psal xl. 6—9; Heb. x. 6—9; Isa. lxi. 1—3; Luke iv. 18, 19; Isa. l. 5, 6. And for those on the part of the Father, see Heb. x. 5; Isa. xi. 2, 3; l. 8, 9; lii. 13, 15; liii. 10—12; lv. 4, 5; xlix. 1—10; Luke ii. 31, 32; xxii. 29; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Rev. vii. 16, 17.

dom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

guished favourites and most intimate friends; yea, and my final and most triumphant appearance, when I shall sit on the throne of my glory, you may expect to be assessors with me on that grand occasion, *and* to *sit upon thrones*, as I formerly promised you, (Mat. xix. 28.) *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*,[b] and condemning the whole impenitent world for their contempt of that gospel which you, as the chief ministers of my kingdom, are to offer and unfold to them. SECT. CLXX. Luke XXII. 30.

[a] John XIII. 18. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me.

But when I speak in this manner of your final honour and happiness, *I speak not of you all: I know* the real character, and all the most secret views and transactions of those *whom I have chosen;* and could long ago have fixed a mark of infamy on the traitor, and have put it out of his power to execute his wicked purpose; *but*, as I chose him to be one of my companions, I leave him to go on, *that the scripture may be fulfilled*, which says, (Psal. xli. 9.) "*He that* "*eateth bread with me*, and has been nourished "by my care and favour, *hath lift up his heel* "*against me*, like an ungrateful brute that "kicks at the kind master who feeds him."[c] Such treatment David met with from those whom he trusted; and such I know that I am to expect. John xiii. 18

19 Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

And this *I tell you now, before it comes to pass, that when it comes* to be accomplished, *you may* be so far from doubting of the truth of my mission upon that account, that, on the contrary, you may more firmly *believe that I am* [*he*,] 19

[b] *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*] The interpretation given of this promise here, (and before on Mat. xix. 28. sect. cxxxvii. p. 231.) appears to me preferable to that which refers it only, or chiefly to the power which the apostles had in the Christian church, as the authorized ambassadors of Christ.—It by no means implies that Paul and Barnabas, the apostles of the Gentiles, shall be excluded from the honour of being assessors with Christ in his kingdom; (compare 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3; Rev. ii. 26, 27; iii. 21.) but seems plainly to allude to the courts of judicature among the Jews, where the inferior judges sat in a semicircle round the chief judge, who had his seat in the middle point of it. Compare Rev. iv. 4; xxi. 14.

[c] *He that eateth bread with me*, &c.] When these words are so plainly to be found, Psal. xli. 9. it seems very unnatural, with Mr. Jeffrey, (in his Review. p. 187.) to imagine they refer to Psal. lv. 12, 13, because something like the sense of them occurs there. Nor is it necessary, with Mr. Pierce, (Dissert. iii.) to suppose a trajection in these two verses, and render them, *I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but I tell you this before-hand, that when it shall come to pass that the scripture shall be fullfilled,* "*One that eateth of my bread hath lift up* "*his heel against me,*" *ye may believe that I am he.* I rather think, with Brennius, that it is an accommodation; and that the sense and connection are to be explained accordingly, as in the paraphrase.

SECT. CLXX. John XIII. 20

that I told you I was even the true Messiah. And, whatsoever therefore I shall suffer, let not your zeal to carry on my cause be lessened, but stedfastly persist in your adherence to it, with a firm persuasion that I will support you in it; for in this view I look upon your interest as my own, and as I formerly declared, (Mat. x. 40, sect. lxxvi. and Luke x. 16. sect. xcvii.) so now *I most assuredly say unto you, Whoever entertains* and shews regard to you, or *any of my* other *messengers*, as coming in my name, *entertains me; and whoever entertains me, entertains him that sent me;* as, on the other hand, when you or they are slighted, the affront redounds to me and to my Father.

20 Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

21 Now *when Jesus had thus said*, he made a solemn pause. (*The devil*, as was observed before, *having already*, by his vile and pernicious insinuations, *put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot*, [*the son*] *of Simon*,[d] *to betray him* into the hands of his murderous enemies.) And, as our Lord well knew that Judas was then watching for an opportunity to accomplish his horrid purpose, which he would execute that very night, *he was* much *troubled in spirit* to think of so ungrateful and impious a design in one so near him, and so much obliged to him; *and as they sat* together, *and were eating* the paschal supper, *Jesus* openly *testified and said* with a deep sigh, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, That*, how incredible soever the hint I just now gave you may seem, *one of you who is eating with me* in this friendly and intimate manner *will* quickly *betray me* to those that thirst for my blood; [*and*] *behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is* now *with me on the table.*

21 When Jesus had thus said, [—2 The devil having now put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him,] he was troubled in spirit, and [Mark, as they sat, and did eat, Jesus] testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you, [Mark, which eateth with me] shall betray me; [Luke, *and* behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me, *is* with me on the table.] [Mat. xxvi. 21. Mark xiv. 18. Luke xxii. 21. John xiii.—2.]

22 *Then the disciples were exceedingly grieved* to hear of his being betrayed at all, and much more to be told that it should be by one of their own number, while, no one being singled out from the rest, the suspicion lay in common among them; *and* they *looked* stedfastly *on each*

22 Then the disciples [were exceeding sorrowful, and] looked one on ano-

[d] *The devil having already put it into the heart of Judas*, &c.] That Satan entered into Judas before he went to the chief priests and agreed to betray his Master to them, had been observed before, Luke xxii. 3, p. 400; and that this clause of John xiii. 2, would be inserted here, was intimated in the close of note [a], sect. clxix. p. 407, where I accounted for this transposition.

SECT. CLXX.

John XIII. 22

ther, doubting of whom he spake: [Luke, and they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing;] and [began every one of them to say unto him [Mark, one by one,] Lord, is it I?] Mat. xxvi. 22. Mark xiv. 19. Luke xxii. 23.]

other for some time in silence, *doubting of whom he spake*, and studious to observe in whose countenance they might read any peculiar confusion, which might look like an indication of guilt: *and*, as they none of them knew where to fix it, but the vile wretch himself, *they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it could be that was about to do this thing*; and, earnestly desirous to be freed from the suspicion of such heinous wickedness, they applied themselves to Christ, *and began every one of them to say to him, one by one, Lord, is it I* that am this guilty creature?[e] Thou knowest that my very heart abhors the thought, and I hope I shall never be capable of entertaining it.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.

Now one of his disciples, namely John, *whom Jesus loved* with a peculiar tenderness, and honoured with the most intimate friendship, sat next him at the table, on his right-hand; and, as they were all in a reclining posture, each of them resting on his left elbow, so in the place where John was seated he *was leaning on the bosom of Jesus*. And as the question was almost gone round, and Jesus made no answer to it, but rather seemed to be swallowed up in mournful contemplation, *Simon Peter therefore* looked upon John, and *beckoned to him* with a motion of his head,[f] by which he intimated his desire *that he should* privately *ask* him *who it might be of whom he spake*. *He then lying down* closer *on the breast of Jesus*, that he might put the question without being heard by the rest of the company, secretly whispered and *said to him*, *Lord, who is it?* And *Jesus answered* him with a low voice, *It is he to whom I shall give this sop, when I have dipped it*. *And when he had dipped the sop* in a thick kind of sauce made of dates, raisins, and other ingredients beaten together, and properly diluted,[g] *he gave it to Judas Iscariot, [the son] of Simon*, putting it to-

[e] *To say to him, one by one, Lord, is it I?*] I look on this as a strong proof that the facts mentioned John xiii. 23—26, did not happen a night or two before; for if Christ had then privately marked out Judas to John and Peter as the traitor, the information must surely have reached the rest of the company by this time.

[f] *Beckoned to him* with a motion of his head.] This is certainly the import of the word νευσε, which might more exactly be rendered *nodded*.

[g] In a thick kind of sauce made of dates, &c.] The Jews still retain such a sauce, which they call charoseth, made of such kind of ingredients, about the con-

SECT. CLXX.

wards that part of the dish which was nearest him, and directing it towards him. Upon which Judas put forth his hand to take it; *and* while he was just in this posture, others continuing the same question to Jesus, *he answered and said to them, [It is] one of the twelve, [even] he that now dippeth his hand with me in the dish, this very person shall betray me.*[h] And let him not vainly hope that I shall exert my miraculous power to rescue myself from the hands of mine enemies, after he has delivered me to them and secured to himself the wages of unrighteousness; for *the Son of man*, great and powerful as he will finally appear, *is indeed going* to sufferings and death,[i] *as it is written* in the scriptures, *[and] determined* in the Divine counsels, *concerning him:*[k] *but* as those prophecies and counsels have no influence to destroy the free agency of the

Mat. XXVI. 23

MAT. XXVI. 23. And he answered and said [unto them, *It is* one of the twelve,] He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. [Mark xiv. 20.]

24 The Son of man [indeed] goeth, as it is written [Luke, *and* determined] of

sistence of mortar, to represent the clay in which their forefathers wrought while they were under bondage to the Egyptians. See Buxt. Synag. Jud. cap. 18, and the Religious Ceremonies of all Nations, Vol. I. p. 215.

[h] *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish.*] Some very ingenious persons imagine that Christ by this phrase only declares it was one who sat on the same side of the table with him, and so eat out of the same dish; and, if it were so, there might seem a gradation in the discovery not observable on any other interpretation. But (not to insist upon it) that the lamb, which was to be roasted whole, Exod. xii. 9, was also to be served up in one dish; I cannot but conclude that, if this had been our Lord's meaning, on his saying here, (as Mark relates it,) in the same breath, εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα *one of the twelve* he would have added εἷς ἐκ τῶν ἐμβαπτομένων, *one of those that dip* rather than ὁ ἐμβαπτόμενος, which plainly signifies, *the very person that dippeth.*

[i] *The Son of man is indeed going.*] As we often in common speech, say a person is going or gone, to intimate that he is dying or dead, so Elsner shews (Observ. Vol. I. p. 119,) that the word ὑπάγει has the ambiguity. Compare Josh. xxiii. 14; and Psal. xxxix. 13.—The repetition of that title of *the Son of man*, which is twice used here in the same verse, has a peculiar energy and dignity, not commonly observed.

[k] *As it is determined.*] As this passage is not liable to the ambiguities which some have apprehended in Acts ii. 23, and iv. 28, (which yet seem, on the whole, to be parallel to it in their most natural construction,) I look upon it as an evident proof, that those things are in the language of scripture said to be determined, or decreed, (or exactly bounded and marked out by God, as the word ὁρίζω most naturally signifies,) which he sees will in fact happen, in consequence of his volitions, without any necessitating agency; as well as those events of which he is properly the author; (and, as Beza well expresses it, *Deum, emendate sane loquitur*, we need not fear falling into any impropriety of speech when we use the language which God has taught) I say, without any necessitating agency; because I apprehend that this text, among many others, must entirely overthrow the scheme which Mr Colliber (in his Inquiry into the Divine existence, p. 97—102.) has so laboriously endeavoured to establish; and which the author of the Persian Letters from Paris, (Letter lvi.) so confidently asserts, "That where God "foresees an event, he always determines "to render it necessary, and so to suspend the moral agency and accountableness of the creature concerned in it." Were this the case, nothing could be more unjust (on the principles of these authors,) than to foretel punishments to be inflicted for such actions; which is plainly the case here, and indeed in most other places where evil actions are foretold.

him: but wo unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed: it had been good for that man, if he had not been born. [Mark xiv. 21. Luke xxii. 22.]

persons concerned in his death, so there will be a most terrible *wo to that man by whom the Son of man is* so perfidiously *betrayed*, and who presumes to set a price on his royal and sacred blood: *it had been well for that man if he had never been born;* for a speedy and most dreadful vengeance awaits him, which will make the immortality of his being his everlasting curse. SECT. CLXX. Mat. XXVI. 24

25 Then Judas which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

Then Judas, who was indeed the person that *betrayed him, answered* in some confusion, lest by his silence he should seem to confess his guilt, *and said, Master, is it I* that shall do this thing, and to whom thou referest in these severe words? And *he said to him, Thou hast said* [*right;*] thou art the very person, and I will conceal it no longer.[l] 25

JOHN XIII. 27. And after the sop, Satan entered into him, Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

And after he was thus expressly marked out, not only by *the sop* which Jesus gave him,[m] but also by the answer which he had returned to his question, *Satan entered into him* with greater violence, and stirred up in his bosom such indignation and rage at the disgrace he had met with, that he could bear the place no longer; but prepared abruptly to leave it before the table was dismissed. *Then Jesus said to him, What you* are going to *do, do quickly;* farther intimating to him his perfect knowledge of the appointment he had made with the chief priests and elders, and admonishing him, as it were, not to lose the opportunity by over-staying his time. *But* the reference being thus particular to what none of the company but himself was privy to, *no man at the table knew* what was his meaning, or *for what purpose he spake this to him. For some* [*of them*] *thought, because Judas had the* keeping of the common *purse*, on which they were to subsist during their stay at Jerusalem, *that* it was as if *Jesus had said to him*, Take the first opportunity to *buy those* sacri- John XIII. 27

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy

[l] *Thou hast said right.*] This is plainly the import of the original phrase; *It is as thou hast spoken.* (See Mat. xxvi. 63—65; Mark xiv. 61, 62; Luke xxii. 70; John xviii. 37.) Thus, *Now you say something*, signifies among us, *You speak right.*

[m] *After the sop.*] It seems very unnatural to apprehend, with Dr. Reynolds, (in his Works, p. 101, 102.) that Judas was encouraged by Christ's giving him the sop, to hope that Christ would, after all, provide for his own safety, and admit him into favour again. Christ's words above expressly cut off all such hope; and I believe every reader will judge the common account given of the connection much more probable.

SECT. CLXX. John XIII. 29

fices, and other *things, which we shall need for the feast* to-morrow, and on the following days,[n] *or that* perhaps he intended *he should give something to the poor*, which Christ used to do, though their stock was so small; but always did it in a very private manner, which made it the more probable that he should only give such an oblique hint of that intention. Of this they thought, rather than of any bad design of Judas; for they did not imagine that, if he was to prove the traitor, his wickedness could immediately take place; or that he was so utterly abandoned as to go away to accomplish it with those awful words of his master sounding, as it were, in his ears.

those things that we have need of against the feast: or that he should give something to the poor.

30 But *he* was capable of committing the crime, even with this aggravation; and *therefore having*, as was said, *received the sop*, he *immediately went out* without any farther reply; *and* as *it was night*, which was the time he had appointed to meet those who were consulting the death of Jesus, under the covert of it he went to them, and fulfilled his engagements, in a few hours after, by delivering his Master into their hands.

30 He then having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxii. 28

WHO would not gladly *continue with Christ* in the strictest fidelity, amidst all the *trials* which can arise, when he observes how liberally he repays his servants, and how graciously he seems to relish his own honours the more, in proportion to the degree in which those honours are shared with them; *appointing* 29, 30 them a glorious *kingdom*, and erecting *thrones* for each of them? And surely, though the *apostles of the Lamb* are to have their

[n] *Which we shall need for the feast.*] This is one of the passages which has led Grotius and other considerable critics to conclude, that our Lord kept the passover at least one day sooner than the rest of the Jews. The controversy is too large to be critically discussed here: I content myself with referring to Dr. Whitby's excellent Dissertation on the subject, (in his Appendix to Mark xiv.) only observing, that the supposition of Christ's anticipating the day appointed by the law, is so improbable, that I think it more reasonable to suppose that the word *feast*, or *passover*, may signify the offerings attending the *whole feast*, and particularly those presented on the *first day of unleavened bread*; which is certainly the sense of the word elsewhere. (See Deut. xvi. 2; and 2 Chron. xxxv. 7—9.) And if this be admitted, it will obviate the most plausible argument for Grotius's opinion, which is that taken from John xviii. 28. Others grounded on John xiii. 1, 2; xix. 14; and Mat. xxvi. 5; are obviated in the paraphrase or notes on those places, as the attentive reader will easily perceive.

peculiar dignity in the great day of his triumph, there is a sense in which he will perform *to every one that overcometh*, that yet more condescending promise, *I will grant* him to *sit down with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.* (Rev. iii. 21.) Let our souls in that confidence be strengthened to all the labours and sufferings to which he may call us forth. SECT. CLXX.

It is a melancholy reflection, that there should be any one in this select company, to whom this endearing promise did not belong; especially one who, having *eaten of Christ's bread,* should, in such a sense and degree as *Judas, lift up his heel against him.* Deliver us O Lord, from any share in that guilt! We are treated as *thy friends;* we are set *at thy table:* let us not ungratefully *kick against thee,* while *the ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib!* (Isa. i. 3.) John xiii. 18.

If we would not do it, let us be *jealous* over ourselves *with a godly jealousy.* Happy are they whose *hearts* witness to their sincerity in the presence of him that searches them, and can *cheerfully* say, *Lord, is it I?* Let them say it *humbly* too; lest the infirmity of nature prevail upon them beyond their present purpose or apprehension, and lead them on to do that, the very thought of which they would now abhor. Mat. xxvi. 22.

How artfully must *Judas* have conducted himself, when on such an intimation no particular *suspicion* appears to have fallen on him! But how vain is that artifice, be it ever so refined, which, while it preserves a character in the sight of men, cannot in the least degree impose upon *Christ!* The day will come when he will lay open the false and ungrateful *hypocrite,* in a more overwhelming manner than that in which he here exposed *Judas;* and, whatever advantage he may have gained, either by professing religion, or by betraying it, he will undoubtedly find that *it had been good for him that he had never been born.* Mark xiv. 19. Mat. xxvi. 23, 25, 24

One would have imagined that an admonition like this, which laid bare the secrets of his heart, and warned him so plainly and faithfully of his danger, might have wrought some remorse in his heart, or at least have proved some impediment to the immediate execution of his design: but, being now given up by the righteous judgment of God to the influence of *Satan,* and the lust of his own depraved mind, he is exasperated, rather than reclaimed by it; *and immediately goes forth,* under the covert of the *night,* to hasten the accomplishment of that work of darkness, the consequences of which had been so awfully represented. O Lord, let thy grace, and thy love, do that for us which thy terrors alone cannot do! Let our hearts be melted by that nobler principle, and taught to abhor every thing which would displease thee! Oh, let them flow forth into such workings of *compassion* to the afflicted, as engaged the blessed *Jesus* to relieve *the poor* John xiii. 27. 30

29

SECT. CLXX. out of his own little stock; and into those sentiments of *candour* which would not permit the *apostles*, even after this admonition, to imagine *Judas* altogether so bad as he indeed was, but led them to put the mildest construction on their Master's ambiguous address to him! Such may our *mistakes* be, wherever we do mistake; the errors of a *charity*, which would not by excessive rigour injure the vilest sinner, and much less the least and weakest of God's servants!

SECT. CLXXI.

Christ, having exhorted his disciples to mutual love, forewarns them of their approaching trial, and foretells Peter's fall, immediately before the eucharist. Luke XXII. 31—34. John XIII. 31, *to the end.*

JOHN XIII. 31.

SECT. CLXXI. John XIII. 31

IT was observed in the preceding section how Judas, being marked out both by Christ's actions and his words, quitted the place in a mixture of rage and confusion: *when therefore he was* thus *gone out*,[a] *Jesus said* to the rest of his disciples as they sat at the table with him, *Now is the Son of man* just on the point of being *glorified* far more remarkably than ever; *and God* in a most illustrious manner *is* to be *glorified in him*, by the signal and extraordinary circumstances of his abasement and exal-

JOHN XIII. 31. THEREFORE when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 tation. And you may assure yourselves, that *if God be glorified in him, God will also glorify him in* and with *himself*, in such a degree as shall in the most convincing manner declare his intimate relation to him; *and* the time *will presently* come, when he will eminently *glorify him*: for the Son of man is very shortly to enter on the honours of his celestial and universal kingdom, and in the mean time, some rays of Divine glory shall shine through all that cloud of ignominy, reproach, and distress, which shall surround him.

32 If God be glorified in him; God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 My dear *little children*, whom I love even

33 Little children,

[a] *When therefore he was gone out.*] The reader will observe that, if the former reasoning relating to the order of this part of the story be just, Judas certainly went out before the eucharist was instituted. And indeed one cannot reasonably suppose, Christ would have commanded him to drink of the cup, as the blood shed for him for the remission of his sins, when he had just before been declaring in effect, that his sins should never be forgiven.

yet a little while I am with you: Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you.

with parental tenderness, and whom my heart pities under all your trials and sorrows, it is yet but *a* very *little while* longer that *I am* to continue *with you;* a few hours more will part us: and when I am gone, *ye shall seek me, and* wish for my presence and converse; but, *as I said to the Jews,* that *whither I go, ye cannot come* (John vii. 34; and viii. 21, p. 52, 67); *so now I say to you,* Ye cannot as yet come to the place whither I am going. But observe my parting words, and let them be written on your very hearts; for *I give* it *you* as *a new commandment,*[b] and press you by new motives and a new example to a duty which hitherto, alas, has been too little regarded; and from henceforth would have you to consider it as confirmed by a new sanction, and to keep it ever fresh in your memories; *That ye love one another* with a most sincere and ardent affection, such as mankind have never known before; yea, I would now enjoin you, *even as I have loved you, that ye also* would *love one another,* with a friendship which may carry you through such difficulties and sufferings as I am going to endure for you all. This will be the most acceptable and the most ornamental token of your relation to me; and I recommend it to you, as the noblest badge of your profession:[c] for *by this shall all*

SECT. CLXXI. John XIII. 33

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

34

35 By this shall

35

[b] *A new commandment.*] I apprehend this expression signifies much more than merely *a renewed command.* (Compare 1 John ii. 7, 8; and 2 John ver. 5.) It seems a strong and lively intimation that the engagements to mutual love, peculiar to the Christian dispensation, are so singular, and so cogent, that all other men, when compared with its votaries, may seem uninstructed in the school of friendship, and Jesus may appear, as it were, the first professor of that Divine science. Jamblicus (Vit. Pythag. cap. 33.) seems very injuriously to have preferred the Pythagoreans to all other men on that account; but it may be observed, that both he and Eunapius, like many moderns, seem to have had very little regard to truth when falsehood might cast a slur on Christianity.—Dr. Clarke well observes, that our Lord seems to have laid this peculiar stress on charity, as foreseeing that general corruption and destruction of true Christianity, which the want of it would cause among those that should call themselves his church. (Clark's Sermons, Vol. III. p. 297.)—Raphelius (Annot. ex. Xen. p. 137—139) has the best note I ever saw on the passage, though I think it hardly reaches the full spirit of it; in which he shews that Xenophon calls the *laws of Lycurgus* καινολεῖοι νομοι, *very new laws,* several hundred years after they were made; because, though they had been commended by other nations, they had not been practised by them.—Perhaps our Lord may here insinuate a reflection, not only on that party spirit which prevailed so much in the Jews, but likewise on the emulations and contentions among the apostles themselves, which mutual love would easily have cured. In this sense it is still a new commandment to us, who generally act as if we had not yet got time to learn, or even to read it.

[c] The noblest badge of your profession.] It is well known that the founders of new societies appoint some peculiar ornament, sign, or mode of living, by which their

SECT. CLXXI.

men know that you are my disciples indeed, *if* they see *you have* that lively and generous *love for each other* which nothing but my gospel can be sufficient to inspire.

all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

John XIII. 35

36 On this Jesus paused, that they might have an opportunity to reflect seriously on the important charge he had given them. And *Simon Peter*, touched with what he had said of his being ready to go whither they could not come, *said to him, Lord*, permit us to inquire, *whither art thou going? Jesus answered him*, I tell thee, Peter, *Whither I am going thou canst not* directly *follow me now;* for thou art intended for service in my church for many future years: *but* let it suffice thee, that *thou shalt follow me afterwards* in the same way,[d] and dwell perpetually with me. *Peter said to him*, in a transport of eager and tender affection, *Lord, why cannot I follow thee now?* Whatever difficulties and dangers may be in the way, the prospect of them does not discourage me; for *I will* most willingly *lay down my life for thy sake*, and had much rather die than part with thee.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 But *Jesus answered him, Wilt thou* indeed so readily *lay down thy life for my sake?* Alas, thou knowest not thine own weakness, or thou wouldst never talk thus confidently.

38—Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake?—

Luke xxii 31 *And the Lord* added with great earnestness, and *said, O Simon, Simon*, I must tell thee, that an hour of terrible trial is just at hand, which will press harder than thou art aware on thee, and on all thy companions here: for *behold Satan*, as in the case of Job, (Job ii. 4, 5.) *has requested* of God a permission [*to assault*] *you* all by furious and violent temptations, *that he may* toss you up and down, and *sift* [*you*] *like* 32 *wheat* in a sieve: (compare Amos ix. 9.) *But I*, foreseeing the danger to which thou, Peter, wilt peculiarly be exposed, have graciously prevented thee with the tokens of my friendly care,

LUKE XXII. 31—And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

32 But I have

followers may be known from others. This seems to be here alluded to.

[d] *Thou shalt follow me afterwards.*] I am ready to think our Lord here obliquely hints at what he afterwards farther signified in his command to Peter after his resurrection, when he ordered him to follow him (John xxi. 18, 19, sect. cci); namely, that Peter should die on the cross for his sake; which ancient history assures us that he did. See Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 1.

prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

and *have prayed* to my Father *for thee, that* he would communicate to thee such supplies of grace that *thy faith may not* utterly *fail*, and sink under the violent shock it is to receive: *and* let me now exhort thee, that *when thou art returned* from those wanderings, into which I know thou wilt fall, to the paths of wisdom and duty,[e] thou wouldst be sure to make it thine immediate care to *strengthen thy brethren*; and do thine utmost, all the remainder of thy days, to engage all over whom thou hast any influence, to a steady adherence to my cause, in the midst of the greatest difficulties.[f] SECT. CLXXI. Luke XXII. 32

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

And such was still the confidence that Peter had of his own stedfastness and zeal, that *he said to him*, with renewed eagerness and warmth, *Lord*, what I said but now is the deliberate sentiment and resolution of my heart: lead me therefore whither thou pleasest: for *I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death* itself, and whatsoever I may suffer by continuing with thee, none of the most cruel of thine enemies shall ever be able to part us. 33

34 And he said, [Verily verily, I say unto thee,] Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before

But Jesus, that *he* might convince him of his weakness, and prevent his ever trusting in his own heart again, *said* to him, *Peter*, I know the sincerity of thine intention, yet *I most assuredly say unto thee, It shall not be* the time of *cock-crowing to-day*,[g] *before* thou shalt be so ter- 34

[e] *When thou art returned*, &c.] Και συ ποτε επιστρεψας στηριξον τους αδελφους σου. I cannot think the authorities which the learned Elsner produces, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 276, 277.) sufficient to induce us, with Sir Norton Knatchbull, to translate these words, *Do thou, some time or other, convert and strengthen thy brethren.*—For the signification of επιστρεφειν, see Acts ix. 35; xi. 21; xiv. 15.

[f] Make it thine immediate care, &c.] I can see no objection against taking the charge in this comprehensive sense: and as I question not but Peter, after he had wept his fall so bitterly, as we know he did applied himself to rally his dispersed brethren, and to prevent their fleeing from Jerusalem, till the third day was over, in the morning of which he was up betimes and early at the sepulchre of our Lord: (see John xx. 2, 3. sect. cxciv.) So indeed the strain of his epistles shews his long and affectionate remembrance of this solemn charge. Many passages of the first are peculiarly intended to animate his Christian brethren to a courageous adherence to Christ, amidst the greatest dangers, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7; ii. 19, 20; iii. 14—18; iv. 12—19; v. 8, 9, 10; and the second has several cautions to guard them against the seductions of error, in some instances more to be dreaded than the terrors of the severest persecution. 2 Pet. i. 10, 12; ii. 1, 2, 20 21; iii. 2, 17.

[g] *It shall not be* the time of *cock-crowing to-day.*] A careful perusal of sect. clxxxi. compared with this, will shew why I have not here brought in the account which Matthew and Mark have given us of Christ's admonitions to Peter and his brethren on this head; which appear to be the renewal of this some hours after. As it is plain from thence and the event,

SECT. CLXXI. Luke XXII. 34

rified at the faces of these enemies whom thou now defiest, *that thou shalt thrice deny that thou* so much as *knowest me*, and shall solemnly disclaim all regard to me. (Compare Mat. xxvi. 34, and Mark xiv. 30, sect. clxxxi.)

that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me [John xiii. —38.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxii. 33. 31 32—

ALAS, how ready are we to forget ourselves; and how much safer are we in *Christ*'s hands than in our own! How frequently do we *resolve* like *Peter*, and in how many instances do we *fall* like him! We see the malice of *Satan*, and how eagerly he *desired* to try the *apostles*, and even to *sift* them *as wheat:* we see also the gracious care of our *Redeemer*, who, foreseeing the danger of his servants, laid in an unsought remedy, to which they respectively owed their security, or their recovery.

Let us rejoice that the great enemy is under such restraints, and can have no power against us, unless by *permission* from above. Let us rejoice that *Christ* is a constant and invariable Friend to his people; and still appears as an *Advocate with the Father*, and as a tender faithful *Shepherd*, watching over them for good, while *Satan* is *seeking to devour them.* (1 Pet. v. 8.) If at any time that adversary *get an advantage* over us, let us endeavour in the strength of Divine grace an immediate recovery; —32 and *when restored*, let us exert ourselves to *strengthen our brethren:* for surely it is most reasonable that we, who are *surrounded with* such various, and such sensible *infirmities, should have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.* (Heb. v. 2.)

John xiii. 34. 31 36

In this instance, as in all others, let us be mindful of the dying *charge*, the *new commandment* of our dear *Lord;* and let us shew upon all occasions, this distinguishing *badge* of our relation to him, even our *love to each other.* So will our profession be adorned, and *the Son of man* be farther *glorified*, by the conduct of his servants on earth: so shall he at length *glorify us with himself*, and after a short absence call us to *follow him* into those regions of perfect love, which must of course be the seats of everlasting joy.

In the mean time, send down, O gracious *Emmanuel*, thy *Spirit of love* on all thy followers; that we may no longer glory in

that the cock actually crew before Peter's third denial, we must certainly take the words of Luke and John, as in this version, for the common time of cock-crowing, which probably did not come till after the cock which Peter heard had crowed the second time, and perhaps oftener. For it is well known, those vigilant animals, on any little disturbance, often crow at midnight, or before it; though they do not come from their roost till about three in the morning, which was usually called the cock crowing. (Mark xiii. 35.) See Dr. Whitby's Note on Mat. xxvi. 34.

the little distinctions of this or that *party*, but may *shew we are Christians* by this resplendent ensign of our order! May we bind it on our shoulders as a mark of honour, and wear it as a crown upon our heads; that the spirit of hatred, reproach, and persecution may vanish like an unwholesome mist before the sun, and it may again be universally said, as of old, *Behold, how these Christians love one another!* Amen. SECT. CLXXI. Ver. 35

SECT. CLXXII.

Christ, at the conclusion of the passover, institutes the eucharist. Mat. XXVI. 26—30. Mark XIV. 22—26. Luke XXII. 19, 20.

MAT. XXVI. 26.

MAT. XXVI. 26. AND as they were eating, Jesus took bread, [Luke, and gave thanks,] and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said,

SUCH was the admonition that Christ gave to Peter, and such was his discourse with his disciples while they were at supper; *and* now, *as they were eating*, or just as they had finished, the paschal supper,[a] *Jesus took* a cake of *bread;* 26 *and having* in a solemn manner *given thanks* to his heavenly Father, *and blessed* [*it*,] that is, having implored the Divine blessing on it, and on the ordinance then to be instituted, that it might in all succeeding ages tend to the edification and comfort of his people;[b] *he brake* the bread into several pieces, *and gave* some of [*it*] *to* each of *the disciples* present, *and said, Take* SECT. CLXXII. Mat. XXVI.

[a] Just as they had finished the paschal supper.] Maimonides and other rabbies tell us, that it was a rule among the Jews, at the end of the supper, to take a piece of the lamb for the last thing they eat that night. (See Ainsworth, as quoted before, note [c], p. 405.) If this custom was as old as Christ's time, it would make this action so much the more remarkable It would plainly shew, that the bread here distributed was a very distinct thing from the meal they had been making together; and might be, in the first opening of the action, a kind of symbolical intimation, that the Jewish passover was to give way to another and nobler divine institution.

[b] *Blessed it.*] It is not expressly said in the original, that Christ blessed *it*, that is, *the bread*, (nor indeed that he brake *it*;) but it is very reasonable to imagine, that this thanksgiving was attended with a prayer that the Divine blessing might accompany the bread. And it is so very plain from 1 Cor. x. 16, that the apostles taught Christians to bless the cup, that I cannot but wonder, that one of the most accurate and penetrating writers of our age should scruple to allow, that *Christ blessed the sacramental elements*. The same word is used in Mat. xiv. 19; Mark vi. 41; viii. 7; and Luke ix. 16; where it is certain, an extraordinary *blessing* attended *the bread* and *fishes* in answer to his prayers. (See also Mark x. 16; Luke ii. 34; and Gen. ii. 3, Septuag.) It would indeed be absurd to interpret this, of his conferring a virtue on bread so set apart, to work as a charm, either on mens bodies or souls; but I hope few Christians are so ill instructed as to imagine this to be the case in the eucharist; and all wise and faithful ministers will, no doubt, be solicitous to preserve them from so wild and mischievous a notion.

SECT. CLXXII. Mat. XXVI.

this bread and *eat* it with reverence and thankfulness; for *this is my body*, that is, it is the sensible sign and representation of my body,[c] *which is* freely *given*, and is speedily to be 26 broken, bruised, wounded, and even slaughtered *for you*. *Do this* hereafter, in your assemblies for religious worship, *in* a pious and affectionate *commemoration of me*, that you may keep up the memory of my dying love, may openly profess your dependence on my death, and impress your hearts with a becoming sense of it. (Compare 1 Cor. xi. 24.)

Take, eat; this is my body, [Luke, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.] [Mark xiv. 22. Luke xxii. 19.]

27 *And in like manner, after they had supped, he also took the cup*,[d] that is, another cup different from that which he had before divided among them; (Luke xxii. 17. p. 406.) *and when he had given thanks* to his heavenly Father, and implored his blessing upon it, as a solemn sacra-

27 And [Luke, likewise also] he took the cup, [Luke, after supper,] and gave

[c] *This is my body.*] When I consider that (as a thousand writers have observed) on the same foundation on which the Papists argue for transubstantiation from these words, they might prove, from Ezek. v. 1—5, that the prophet's hair was the city of Jerusalem; from John x. 9. and xv. 1. that Christ was literally *a door* and *a vine*; and from Mat. xxvi. 27, 28. and 1 Cor. xi. 25. that *the cup* was *his blood*, and that Christ commanded his disciples to drink and swallow the cup; I cannot be astonished at the inference they would deduce from hence. Had Irenæus or Epiphanius reported such a thing of any sect of ancient heretics now extinct, one would have been so candid to human nature as to suppose the historian misinformed. As it is, one is almost tempted to suspect it to be the effect of arrogance rather than error; and to consider it as a mere insolent attempt to shew the world, in the strongest instance they could invent, what monstrous things the clergy should dare to say, which the wretched laity should not dare to contradict; nay, which they should be forced to pretend they believed. In this view the thought is admirable, and worthy the most malicious wit that ever lorded it over the heritage of God. But it may deserve some serious reflection, whether it be not an instance of infatuation, to which God has given them up, that it may be a plain mark to all that will use common sense, of the grossest error in a church which claims infallibility; and may not be intended by Providence as a kind of antidote against the rest of its poison.

[d] *After they had supped he also took the cup.*] A learned divine of the establishment, who has favoured me with many sheets of accurate remarks on this work, (which were of so great use to me in correcting it for the second edition, as to demand my public acknowledgments,) has objected to the supposition here made of its being *another cup*, which I have asserted in the paraphrase. But, with all due deference to his penetration, (which is indeed very great,) I must beg leave to observe, that it still appears most probable to me, that it was as I there represent it; not merely because Luke mentions *a cup* taken *before the bread*, (Luke xxii. 17, p. 406.) but because in the passage before us, (ver. 20.) he adds to that the mention of *a cup after it*. It is well known, the Jews used several cups of wine at the passover, and one of them with the antepast, at the very beginning of the feast. (See note [e] on Mark xiv. 17. p. 405.) I know not how far so accurate a writer as St. Luke might farther intimate this distinction, by using the word δεξαμενος (ver. 17.) with respect to the first cup, which strictly expresses receiving it from the hand of another, probably of the servant who waited at the table, whereas λαβων (*taking*) is the word used, ver. 19, of which παλιν here in ver. 20 is governed; which might have been equally proper, if the cup stood on the table before him, as the bread used in the eucharist probably did.

thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; [and they all drank of it.] [MARK XIV. 23.] LUKE XXII. 20.—]

28 For [he said unto them,] This [LUKE, cup] is my blood of the new testament [in my blood], which is shed [LUKE, for you *and*] for many, for the remission of sins. [MARK XIV. 24. LUKE XXII.— 20.]

mental sign, *he gave* [*it*] *to them, and said, Drink ye all of it*, that is, of the wine which it contains: *and* accordingly *they all drank* some *of it*. *For, said he to them*, as he delivered it into their hands, *This cup* of wine *is* a representation of *my blood*, [*even*] of *that* blood which is the great basis *of the new covenant*, [*or*] is itself the seal of *the new covenant*,[e] established *in my blood, which is shed for you*, [*and*] *for many* more, as the great ransom to be paid *for the forgiveness of sins*:[f] receive it therefore with a firm resolution to comply with the engagements of that covenant, and with a cheerful hope of its invaluable blessings; and do this, as often as ye drink it, in a thankful commemoration of me, and with a proper care to distinguish between this and a common meal, appropriating what you do in this ordinance entirely to a religious purpose. (Compare 1 Cor. xi. 25.) *And* then our Lord repeated what he had said as they were sitting down to supper (Luke xxii. 18, p. 406), *Verily, I say unto you, That*

SECT. CLXXII. Mat. XXVI. 28

29 But [verily] I 29

[e] The seal of *the new covenant*.] It seems very evident, that when the sacramental cup here, and in 1 Cor. xi. 25. is called *the new covenant*, it must signify *the seal* of it; just as when *circumcision* is called *God's covenant*, Gen. xvii. 10, and it is there said, ver. 13, *My covenant shall be in your flesh*, we must understand *the seal* of it: and if by *the seal of the covenant* be meant; as I here explain it, and as most take it, "an appointed token of our accepting that covenant, and of God's favour to us on supposition of the sincerity of that acceptance;" it is so plain, that the eucharist, as well as baptism, is such a seal that they who disapprove the word deny not the thing. (See the Plain Account of the Lord's Supper, p. 168, 169.)—I have rendered the word διαθηκη, *covenant*, rather than *testament* or *will*, because it is evidently the more usual signification of the word; and because the old covenant, to which the new is opposed, cannot with any propriety be called a testament, with reference to the death of any testator, which is the idea chiefly insisted on by those who would retain our common version here. And, by the way, it appears on this principle, that the title of our Bible is improperly and obscurely rendered, by a piece of complaisance to the old Latin versions, of which they were by no means worthy; and which they cannot at all the better deserve for that sanction which the papal authority has given to one of them, though it seems thereby to have been preferred to the original.

[f] *In my blood, which is shed*—as the great ransom to be paid *for the forgiveness of sins*.] I apprehend this ordinance of the eucharist to have so plain a reference to the atonement or satisfaction of Christ, and to do so solemn an honour to that fundamental doctrine of the gospel, that I cannot but believe, that while this sacred institution continues in the church, (as it will undoubtedly do to the end of the world,) it will be impossible to root that doctrine out of the minds of plain humble Christians by all the little artifices of such forced and unnatural criticisms as those are by which it has been attacked. Unprejudiced and honest simplicity will always see the analogy this ordinance has to *eating the flesh of the Son of God, and drinking his blood*; and will be taught by it to feed on him as the lamb that was slain by the gracious appointment of God *to take away the sin of the world*. The enemies of this heart-reviving truth might as well hope to pierce through a coat of mail with a straw, as to reach such a truth, defended by such an ordinance as this, by any of their trifling sophistries.

SECT. CLXXII. Mat. XXVI. 29 *from this time I will drink no more of this produce of the vine,*[g] *until that day when I shall drink it new with you in the kingdom of God my Father:* that is, till, being risen from the dead, I have received my mediatorial kingdom, and we shall share together in much nobler entertainments than earth can afford, even in its highest religious solemnities, which shall then be happily superseded.

say unto you, I will [no more] drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of [God] my Father. [Mark xiv. 25.]

30 *And when,* according to the usual custom at the close of the passover, *they had sung an hymn* of praise to God at the conclusion of the eucharist,[h] and had passed some remaining time in those discourses, and in that prayer which will be the subject of the following sections, *they went out to the mount of Olives;* where our Lord had determined to spend some time in devotion, though he knew that Judas and his enemies would come thither to seize him.

30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives. [Mark xiv. 26.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xxvi. 26 LET us now review, with most thankful acknowledgment, this gracious *legacy* of our dying *Redeemer*, this reviving and nourishing *ordinance*, which he instituted for the benefit of his church *the same night in which he was betrayed:* (1 Cor. xi. 23.) So tenderly did his love for them prevail, when his heart was full of his own sorrows! May we always consider to what purposes this holy rite was ordained; and as we shall see the wisdom of the appointment, so we shall also be both awakened to attend to it, and assisted in that attendance!

Luke xxii. 19 It is the *memorial* of the *death of Christ*, by which we represent it to others, and to ourselves. May we be ever ready to give

[g] *I will drink no more of this produce of the vine.*] This may seem an intimation, that though Christ drank with them after his resurrection, (Acts x. 41.) he did not make use of wine. Perhaps their poverty might not allow them often to drink it; and we do not find that he was ever present at any feast; at least we are sure he never celebrated another passover with them. Nor does it appear, that he partook of the eucharist with them, or ever administered it, but at this time of its institution.

[h] *An hymn* of praise to God.] The hymn that was usually sung by the Jews at the passover is what they call the Hallel, which began at Psal. cxiii. and ended with Psal. cxviii. some of which psalms might be used by our Lord at the close of the eucharist, as very suitable to this occasion; though it is uncertain, whether (as Grotius and some others think) it might not be some other hymn, more closely adapted to the celebration of the eucharist.—I thought it proper here to conclude the story of the passover and to mention their going out, though that did not immediately follow on their singing the hymn. Some such little anticipations seem to me an advantage rather than an impropriety, in any harmony, especially when attended with a paraphrase, or notes, and divided into such short sections as those must be which are intended for the use of families.

this most regular and acceptable token, that *we are not ashamed to fight under the banner of a crucified Redeemer!*—It is also the *seal* of the *new covenant in his blood.* Let us adore the grace that formed and ratified that *everlasting covenant*, so well *ordered in all things*, and so *sure:* (2 Sam. xxiii. 5.) And whenever we approach to this *sealing ordinance*, may we renew our consent to the demands of that *covenant*, and our expectation of those blessings which are conveyed by it! a *consent* and *expectation* so well suited to the circumstances of its being ratified by the *blood of Jesus.* Thus may every attendance nourish our souls in grace, and ripen them for glory; that at length all may be fulfilled and perfected *in the kingdom of God.* SECT. CLXXII. Verse 20 Mark xiv. 25

In the mean time, may God, by the influences of his Spirit, give to all professing *Christians* right notions of this *ordinance*, and a due regard for it; that, on the one hand, none may, under the specious pretence of honouring it, live in the *habitual neglect* of so plain and important a duty; and that, on the other, it may never be *profanely invaded* by those who have no concern about the blessings of that *covenant* it ratifies, and impiously prostitute it to those secular views, above which it was intended to raise them! And may none that honour the great Author of it, encourage such an abuse, lest they seem to lay the very *cross of Christ* as the threshold to the temple of those various *idols* to which ambitious and interested men are bowing down their souls!

SECT. CLXXIII.

Christ, having warned his apostles of the danger to which they would be exposed, comforts them with the views of future happiness, and with the assurance of his own gracious presence, and that of his Father, in the way to it. Luke XXII. 35—38. John XIV. 1—14.

LUKE XXII. 35.

Luke XXII. 35. AND he said unto them, When I sent you out without

THOUGH we mentioned Christ's going out to the mount of Olives, after he had instituted the eucharist, it is very material to observe, that before he quitted the guest-chamber in which he had supped, he entertained his disciples with some large and affectionate discourses, and put up an excellent prayer with them, which we shall now relate. *And*, to introduce these discourses, *he said to them, When I sent you*, my apostles, *out* on your important embassy some time ago, *without either purse* to SECT. CLXXIII. Luke XXII 35

SECT. CLXXII. Luke XXII. 35

supply you with money, *or scrip*, to take provisions with you, *or shoes* besides those on your feet, (Mat. x. 9, 10, Vol. I. p. 409.) *did you want any thing* necessary for the support of life? *And they said*, No, Lord, we very well remember that the care of Providence over us was such that we wanted *nothing*; but wherever we came we found the hearts of strangers opened even with surprising freedom to assist and relieve us.

purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 *Then he said to them*, This was indeed the case in your former mission; *but now* you must expect much harder usage than before, and will be exposed to greater sufferings and dangers in the prosecution of your ministry: and therefore *let him that has a purse take* [*it*,] *and also a scrip*, if he has one; *and let him that has no sword* be ready even to *sell his garment and buy one* with the price of it; so long a journey, and so sharp a conflict, is before you, that you had need be

36 Then said he unto them, But now he that hath a purse let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword let him sell his garment, and buy one.

37 well armed and furnished for it. *For I assure you, That* my enemies are now about to apprehend me as a malefactor, and, after all the love that I have shewn to an ungrateful world, *this* remarkable prophecy *which is written* concerning me, (Isa. liii. 12.) *must yet be accomplished in me*, "*And he was numbered with the transgressors*," *for* indeed all *the things* which are written *concerning me* in the scripture-prophecies must quickly *have an end*, and receive their accomplishment in my sufferings and death. Now you may easily guess at the reception you are like to meet with when you come to preach in the name and authority of one who has suffered as a malefactor, and yet demands faith and obedience as an almighty Saviour.

37 For I say unto you That this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 *And they said, Lord, behold here are two swords* that we are furnished with already,[a] which we are resolved, in case of any violent assault, to use in thy defence. *And he said to them, it is enough* for weapons of this sort: my chief intent is to direct you to another kind of defence, even that which arises from piety and faith.[b]

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

[a] *Here are two swords.*] Probably (as Mr. Cradock conjectures, in his Harmony, part ii. p. 209.) some of the apostles brought these swords along with them, in their journey from Galilee and Peræa, to defend them against robbers. It afterwards appears that one of them was Peter's. See John xviii. 10, § clxxxiii.

[b] My chief intent is to direct you to another kind of defence, &c.] This is

SECT. CLXXIII

John XIV. 1.

John XIV. 1. Let not your heart be troubled; *ye* believe in God; believe also *in* me.

Let not your heart therefore *be troubled*, though I am going to leave you in a world where you will seem likely to become an helpless prey to the rage and power of your enemies: *believe in God*, the almighty Guardian of his faithful servants, who has made such glorious promises to prosper and succeed the cause in which you are engaged; and *believe also in me*, as the promised Messiah, who, whether present or absent in body, shall always be mindful of your concerns, as well as ever able to help you.[c]

2 In my Father's house are many mansions; if *it were* not *so*, I would have told

2 And to establish your faith and comfort, accustom yourselves often to look forward to the heavenly world, as those who are well assured that *in my Father's house* from whence I came, and whither I am going to take up my residence, there *are many mansions*;[d] and it is really a spacious and glorious abode, where there will be ample room to receive you, and every thing to accommodate you in the most delightful manner: *and* indeed *if* it were *not* so, as I know you have still acted with regard to the happiness of a future world, though too much mingled with inferior views, *I would* before this time *have told you* so expressly, and not have permitted you to impose upon yourselves by an airy dream;[e] much less would I

strongly intimated by his saying, *Two swords* were *enough*; for they could not be sufficient to arm eleven men.

[c] *Believe in God, believe also in me.*] Πιστευετε εις τον Θεον, και εις εμε πιστευετε. These words are so very ambiguous, that (as Erasmus observes,) they may be rendered as here; or as in our English translation; or *Ye believe in God, and ye believe in me*; or *Believe in God, and ye believe in me*; and different commentators have taken them in all these very different senses. But it appears most natural to render πιστευετε alike in both places; and it is certain, an exhortation to faith in God, and in Christ, would be very seasonable, considering how weak and defective their faith was. (See ver. 9.) —The transition from the passage in Luke to this in John, appears so easy, placing the paragraphs in this order, that I wonder no harmonizer should have observed it before.

[d] *In my Father's house are many mansions.*] Mr. Le Moyne thinks Christ alludes to the various apartments in the temple, and the vast number of persons lodged there. Μονας signifies *quiet and continued abodes*, and therefore seems happily expressed by our English word *mansions*; the etymology and exact import of which, is just the same.

[e] *And if not I would have told you.*] Heinsius's version of these words seems much less natural; he would connect and render them, [ει δε μη, ειπον αν υμιν, πορευομαι, &c.] as if our Lord had said, "*Had it not been so, I would* have spoken "in another manner, and *have told you*, "*I am going to prepare a place for you*; "but now I have no reason to say that, "the place being already prepared." But it is hard to say what sense can be made of ver. 3 on this interpretation.—That the pious Jews considered all the glories of the Messiah's kingdom as introductory to the happiness of a future state of eternal glory, appears from a variety of scriptures; and indeed it is difficult to say how they could think otherwise, considering how much this had been insisted on: or how they could

SECT. CLXXIII. John XIV. 2.

have said so much as I have done to confirm that expectation: but as it is in itself a glorious reality, so *I am* now *going*, not only to receive my own reward, but *to prepare a place for you* there;[f] or to make room for your coming thither, and to dispose every thing for your most honourable and comfortable reception. *And if I* thus *go and prepare a place for you*, you may depend upon it that this preparation shall not be in vain, but that *I will* certainly act so consistent a part as to *come again, and receive you to myself*;[g] *that* as we are now united in so dear a friendship, *you also*, after a short separation, *may be where I am*, and may dwell for ever with me. *And* surely I may say in the general, after all the instructions I have given you, that *you know whither I am going; and you know the way* that leads thither, and by which you may safely follow me; which I exhort you therefore that you would resolutely keep.

But such was still the expectation that his disciples had of his erecting a temporal kingdom, that *Thomas*, upon hearing this, *says to him, Lord*, thou hast never yet informed us of

you: I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we

have been good and pious, had not this been their chief aim. Compare Mat. iii. 12; v. 8, 12; vi. 20; vii. 21; xiii. 43; xix. 16; xxii. 30; Luke xiv. 14; xvi. 9; John iii. 15, 36; vi. 54, 68; xi. 24—27.

[f] *I am going to prepare a place for you.*] When the glory of heaven is spoken of as *prepared before the foundation of the world*, (Mat. xxv. 34.) this only refers to the *Divine purpose*; but as that was founded in *Christ's mediatorial undertaking*, (Eph. i. 4—6.) it might properly be said that, when Christ went into heaven as our *High-priest*, to present (as it were) his own blood before the Father on our account, and as our *Forerunner* to take possession of it, he did thereby *prepare a place for us*; which the apostle expresses (Heb. ix. 23, 24.) by his purifying or consecrating the heavenly places in which we are to dwell, which would have been considered as polluted by the entrance of such sinful creatures into them; as the tabernacle when new-made was, by having passed through the hands of sinners, on which account an atonement for the altar itself, which was considered as most holy, was the first act performed in it when it was opened. (Exod. xxix. 36, 37.) And an atonement for the whole tabernacle, as polluted by the access of sinners to it, was to be repeated annually. Lev. xvi. 16.—It may not however be improper to observe, that the word τοπος is often translated *room*; (Luke ii. 7; xiv. 10, 22; 1 Cor. xiv. 16.) and thus the signification here may be, that Christ went to heaven *to make room for them*, or to remove those things out of the way which obstructed their entrance. This must at least be included; though the word ἑτοιμασαι may perhaps express still more.

[g] *I will come again*, &c.] This coming ultimately refers to Christ's solemn appearance at the last day, to receive all his servants to glory; yet (as was hinted before in note [f] on Luke xii. 40, p. 117.) it is a beautiful circumstance, that the death of every particular believer, considering the universal power and providence of Christ, (Rev. i. 18.) may be regarded as Christ's coming to fetch him home; whereas Satan is spoken of as having naturally the power of death, Heb. ii. 14.

SECT. CLXXIII

John XIV. 6

know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.

the place, and *we know not* so much as *whither thou art going*,[h] *and how* then *can we* possibly *know the way* thither? *Jesus says to him*, I have already intimated to you I am going to the Father; and did you but consider this, you would soon see, that *I am* myself *the Way, and the Truth, and the Life*;[i] that I am to guide, instruct, and animate my followers in their passage to eternal glory, and that their progress will be sure and vigorous in proportion to the steadiness of their faith in me, and the constancy of their regards to me: and this indeed is the true and only way you can take; for *no man cometh to* the knowledge and enjoyment of *the Father*, to whom I am returning, *but by* means of *me*, whose proper office it is to introduce sinful creatures to his presence and favour.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

If, 7 therefore, *you had known me* aright, *you would* surely *have known my Father also*,[k] in whose glory my ministrations so evidently center; *and* such indeed are the discoveries that I have made of him, and such the manifestations of the divine perfections which you have seen in me, that in effect it may be said, that *from henceforth you know him, and have* as it were already *seen him.*

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Then *Philip*, one of the apostles, hearing 8 these words, *says to him*, with a pious ardour becoming his character, *Lord*, do but *shew us the Father*, and bring us to the sight and enjoyment of him,[l] *and it is* happiness *enough for us;* we desire no more, and resign every other hope in comparison of this.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you,

Jesus says to him, 9 *Have I been with you* then *so long a time*, and conversed among you in so familiar a manner for successive years, *and hast thou not* yet *known*

[h] *We know not whither thou art going.*] It is probable Thomas might think that Christ intended to remove to some splendid palace on earth, to set up his court there for a while, before he received his people to the celestial glory.

[i] *I am the Way*, &c.] Our Lord had so lately delivered the same sentiment in language much like this, (John x. 9, p. 206,) that it might well have been expected they should have understood him now.

[k] *If you had known me, you would have known my Father also.*] This is a most important truth; but it does not determine to what degree he must be explicitly known, in order to receive saving benefits by him.

[l] *Lord, shew us the Father.*] The explication given in the paraphrase seems to me a more probable sense than that in which Mr. Fleming understands it; as if Philip had said, "Let us have a vision "of *the Father* in a corporeal form, to "testify the necessity of thy removal "from us." (See Fleming's Christology, Vol. II. p. 202.) I cannot apprehend that the apostles thought the Father visible.

SECT. CLXXIII. John XIV. 9

me, Philip? if thou hadst well considered who I am, thou mightest have better understood what I have now been saying; for *he that has seen me, has* in effect *seen the Father*, as I am the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person: (Heb. i. 3.) *And how [then] dost thou say*, after all that has passed between us, *Shew us the Father.*

and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father?

10 *Dost thou not* then *believe*, though I have before affirmed it so expressly, (John x. 38, p. 214.) *that I [am] in the Father, and the Father is in me*, by so intimate an union as to warrant such language as this?[m] *The words which I speak to you* from time to time, in which I discover and inculcate this important truth, *I speak not* merely *of myself; but* it is really *the Father who dwells in me* that gives me my instructions thus to speak; and it is *he* that operates together with me, and *performs the* miraculous *works* that you have so often seen, which are sufficient to demonstrate the truth of this assertion, mysterious as it is, and incredible as it might otherwise seem. *Believe me* therefore in what I have said, *that I [am]* thus *in the Father, and the Father is in me; or*, if what you have so long known of my general character and veracity will not engage you to take it merely on my single testimony, *at least believe me on account of those works* in which you have so frequently beheld the Father acting with me, and which indeed afford so obvious an argument of it, that one might imagine the sight of a few of them might convince one that was before a stranger to me.

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 And yet *verily, verily, I say unto you*, That you shall have, if possible, a yet stronger evidence than what you have already received: for *he that believes in me*,[n] that is, many of my disciples in these early ages, and each of you in particular, shall receive such an abundant communication of the Spirit, that *the* miraculous *works*

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me,

[m] *I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.*] It is remarkable that Philo, speaking of the *Logos*, has this expression, that *he is* πατρὸς οἰκος ἐν ᾧ διαιτᾶται, *the Father's house in which he dwells*; which is nearly parallel to what the apostle says of Christ, Col. ii. 9, that *in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.* See Dr. Scott's Christian Life, Vol. III. p. 559, note 2.

[n] *He that believes in me.*] It is most evident, in fact, that though this promise be expressed in such indefinite language, it must be limited as in the paraphrase.

SECT. CLXXIII.

the works that I do, shall he do also: and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

which I perform, he shall perform also; yea, works in some respect *greater than these shall he perform; because I go to my Father,* who has thought fit to reserve the most amazing gifts of the Spirit to honour my return into glory; in consequence of which, you shall be enabled to speak with all foreign tongues, to give the Spirit by the imposition of your hands, and to propagate the gospel with such amazing success, as to make more converts in one day than I have done in the whole course of my ministry. John XIV. 12

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

And, in a word, you may depend upon it, that *whatsoever you shall ask in my name,* under the influence[o] of that Spirit, and subservient to the great end of your life and ministry, *I will* certainly *do it, that* so *the Father may* still *be glorified in the Son;* who, when he is ascended up to heaven, will from thence be able to hear and answer prayer, and even in his most exalted state will continue to act with that faithful regard to his father's honour which he has shewn in his humiliation on earth. 13

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it.*

And in this confidence I repeat it again, for the encouragement of your faith and hope, that I will be as affectionate and constant a Friend to you in heaven as I have ever been upon earth; and *if you shall ask any thing in my name, I will* not fail to *do* [*it.*] 14

IMPROVEMENT.

As we see in the beginning of this section that care of Christ over his servants which may engage us cheerfully to trust him for providential supplies, when employed in his work, so we see in the remainder of this, and in the following discourses, the most affectionate discoveries of the very heart of our blessed *Redeemer,* overflowing in every sentence with the kindest concern, not only for the safety but the comfort of his people. We see a lively image of that tenderness with which he will another day *wipe away all tears from their eyes:* (Rev. vii. 17.) Surely when he uttered these words he was also solicitous that *our hearts* might *not be troubled;* and therefore has provided a noble cordial, the strength of which shall continue to the remotest ages, even *faith* Luke xxii. 35, 38 John xiv. 1

[o] *Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name,* under the influence, &c.] As reason in general requires some such limitation as is here given in the paraphrase, so the conclusion of the verse plainly implies it; for it was only by the grant of such petitions that the Father could be glorified in the Son.

SECT. CLXXIII. *in his Father, and in him.* Oh may that blessed principle be confirmed by what we have now been reading!

Let us observe with what a holy familiarity *our Lord* speaks of the regions of glory; not as his servants do, like one dazzled and overwhelmed by the brightness of the idea; but as accustomed and familiarized to it by his high birth.[p] *In my Father's house are many mansions*: (delightful and reviving thought!) and many inhabitants in them, who we hope through grace will be our companions there, and every one of them to increase and multiply the joy.

Ver. 2

It was not for the *apostles* alone that *Christ* went to *prepare a place*: he is *entered* into heaven as *our Forerunner*, (Heb. vi. 20.) and we, if we are believers indeed, may be said, by virtue of our union with him, to *sit together in heavenly places in him.* (Eph. ii. 6.) Let us continually be tending thither, in more affectionate desires, and more ardent pursuits. *We know the way:* we hear *the truth*; oh may we also feel *the life! By Christ*, as the *true and living way*, may we *come to the Father*; that we may have *eternal life*, in *knowing* him, *the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent!* (John xvii. 3.) In *Christ* may we *see him*, and have our eyes and our hearts open to those beams of the Divine glory which are reflected *from the face* of his *only-begotten Son*, who is *full of grace and truth!* (John i. 14.) Has he been thus discovered to us, as *our Father*, and *our God*, let it *suffice us.* Let it diffuse a sacred and lasting pleasure over our souls, though other desirable objects may be veiled or removed; and engage us to maintain a continual *fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* (1 John i. 3.)

John xiv. 4, 6, 9, 8

To this we are invited by every declaration of his readiness to hear and answer our *prayers*: and though those *miraculous powers* of the *Spirit* are ceased, whereby the *apostles* were enabled to equal, or even to *exceed* the *works* of their Master, yet as we have so many important errands to *the throne of grace*, in which the glory of God and the salvation of our souls is concerned, let us come with a *holy boldness* to it, in dependence on *Jesus*, that great *High-priest over the house of God*, who is *passed into the*

13, 14, 12

[p] With what a holy familiarity *our Lord* speaks of the regions of glory, &c.] This is the remark of the pious archbishop of Cambray, in his incomparable Dialogues on Eloquence, (which may God put it into the hearts of our preachers often and attentively to read:) and is much illustrated by observing how the apostles, when describing the heavenly state, employ the most pompous and energetic language, and seem indeed to labour for words, and to be almost dazzled with the lustre and oppressed with the weight of the subject: (compare Rom. viii. 18, 19; 1 Cor. ii. 9; xv. 50, *&c seq.* 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; v. 1—9; xii. 2—4; and 1 John iii. 2.) But Christ speaks of it with a familiar ease and freedom; just as a prince, who had been educated in a splendid court, would speak with ease of many magnificent things, at the sudden view of which a peasant would be swallowed up in astonishment, and would find himself greatly embarrassed in an attempt to explain them to his equals at home.

heavens, and amidst all the grandeur of that exalted state regards his humble followers on earth, and ever appears under the character of their *Advocate* and their *Friend*. SECT. CLXXIII.

SECT. CLXXIV.

Christ proceeds in his discourse with his disciples, recommending a regard to his commandments as the best proof of their love to him, promising his Spirit, and declaring his readiness to meet his approaching sufferings. John XIV. 15, *to the end.*

JOHN XIV. 15.

JOHN XIV. 15. IF ye love me, keep my commandments.

OUR Lord went on with his discourse to his apostles on this solemn occasion, and observing the lively flow of their affection to him in this tender conjuncture of circumstances, he added, *If you* do indeed *love me*, express that love by a constant care to *keep my commandments*; for that will be a surer test, and more acceptable expression of your regard to me, than all your trouble and concern at parting with me. SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 15

16 And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

And thus you may depend on the correspondent expressions of my friendship to you:[a] and particularly that *I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter*,[b] *that he may* more than supply the want of my bodily presence, and *abide with you*, not for a season only, as I have done, but *for ever*; [*Even*] *the* blessed *Spirit of truth* and grace, *whom the world cannot* possibly *receive* as a Comforter, *because it neither sees him, nor knows him*; being altogether destitute of his sanctifying influences, and refusing to admit his testimony to me, *but ye know him* in some measure, even now, by his powerful operations in you, and by you; *for he* 16

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye 17

[a] Thus you may depend on the correspondent expressions of my friendship to you.] The connection may possibly intimate, that they might hope for an abundant degree of the Spirit's communication, in proportion to the prevalency of their love to Christ.

[b] *He will give you another Comforter.*] It is well known that the word παράκλητος may signify a *comforter*, an *advocate*, or a *monitor*; and it is evident, the blessed Spirit sustained each of these characters; but this being a consolatory discourse, I chose to use the former, as our translators have done.—Toland says it is by no contemptible criticism that the Mahometans (instead of περίκλυτον) read περικλυτον, that is, *the illustrious*, which answers to Mahommed in the Arabic language: and so urge this as a prophecy of him. (Tol. Nazaren. p. 13.) Yet he would probably have thought this criticism very contemptible in any but the enemies of Christianity.

SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 18

already *dwells with you* in part, *and shall* quickly *be* more abundantly *in you*, by a much ampler communication both of his gifts and graces. Encourage yourselves therefore with the pleasing expectation, and be assured that *I will not leave you* neglected, like a family of helpless *orphans*, who have no friend or guardian surviving;[c] but *I will come to you* by my spiritual presence, and visit you by the most valuable
19 tokens of my constant care. For it is but *yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more*, as it has done for some time past, though it knows me not; *but* after I have done conversing with the world, I will appear again to you, and *you* shall *see me* in such a manner as to feel the blessed effects of my distinguishing regard to you; for *because I live, you also shall live*, by means of those Divine influences you shall derive from me, to cherish the workings of grace in your hearts, and to train you up to a growing meetness for sharing with me in eternal life. (Com-
20 pare 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.) And *in that day*, when I fulfil this promise to you, *you shall* experimentally *know*, by the most evident and reviving tokens, *that I* [*am*] indeed *in my Father*, *and* that *you* also are *in me, and I in you*, by a
21 most intimate and inseparable union. But this will only be the privilege of such as evidence their love to me by an obedience to my word; for *he that has my commandments* discovered to him, *and* diligently *keeps them, he it is that loveth me*; but none besides have any title to this character, whatever specious pretences they may make to it: *and he that* thus shews that he *loveth me, shall be loved by my Father, and I will* also *love him, and* in a most condescending and endearing manner *will manifest myself to him.*

22 *Judas* was very much surprised at this; *not* Judas *Iscariot*; for he, as it was said before, was gone out before our Lord began this discourse, (chap. xiii. 31. sect. clxxi.) and had he

know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith un-

[c] *I will not leave you orphans.*] Elsner justly observes, that the case of those who have lost the presence and patronage of some dear friend, though not in strict propriety a father, is elegantly and tenderly expressed by this word ὀρφανους. (Compare 1 Thess. ii. 17, Gr.) See Elsner Observ. Vol. I. p. 341.

to him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

been there, he was always too much on his guard to have dropped any hint of his view to Christ's temporal kingdom;[d] but another apostle of that name, who was also called Thaddeus and Lebbeus, the son of Alpheus, and the brother of James, (see note on Mark iii. 18, Vol. I. p. 295.) a near relation to our Lord himself:[e] this Judas, upon hearing Christ express himself in such a way, *says to him, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?* Dost thou not then intend to make a public appearance, which will be obvious to the eyes of all? SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 22.

23 Jesus answered, and said unto him, if a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Jesus answered and said to him, As to that, it may be sufficient to tell you, that, as I said before (ver. 21), *If any man* sincerely *love me, he will* in an humble and obedient manner keep and *observe my word; and* if he shall be found to do so, *my Father*, who at all times has a tender regard to my honour and interest, *will* undoubtedly *love him; and we will* both of us *come to him*, by the favourable tokens of our presence, *and will make* [*our*] constant *abode with him*: you are therefore to understand what I said of manifesting myself to him that loves me, not of any corporeal and sensible appearance, but of such a spiritual and intimate correspondence as the invisible Father of glory and grace maintains with his people through me. 23

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not

But, on the contrary, *he that does not* really *love me, does* 24

[d] Was always too much on his guard, &c.] It is observable, that Judas Iscariot was so finished a hypocrite, that we never find him saying one word of Christ's temporal kingdom, though probably the hope of preferment and gain in it was the chief consideration which engaged him to follow our Lord.—Let the reader indulge me while I tell him, that he owes this remark to that incomparable person, the late reverend Mr. David Some, of Harborough; and let him join with me in lamenting the fatal modesty which engaged him with his dying breath to consign to the flames those writings which (unfinished as some of them might have appeared) would probably have been the means of spreading among thousands that spirit of wisdom, piety, and love, into which the whole soul of the author seemed to be transformed.

[e] A near relation to our Lord himself.] His father Alpheus seems to have been the same with Cleopas; for as Judas and James were the sons of Alpheus (Luke vi. 15. 16), so James is elsewhere said to be the son of Mary, (Mat. xxvii. 56; and Mark xv. 40), who was the wife of Cleopas, and sister to the mother of our Lord, (John xix. 25); Judas is therefore numbered with James, and Joses, and Simon, among the brethren or near kinsmen of our Lord, (Mat. xiii. 35, and Mark vi. 3); and, being so nearly related to Jesus, he might think himself peculiarly concerned to inquire into the meaning of an assertion which seemed inconsistent with the prospect of a temporal kingdom; in which, perhaps, he expected some eminent office.

SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 24.

not observe and keep *my words* with any constancy and resolution; and therefore must expect no such spiritual and eternal benefits, whatever outward privileges he may enjoy: see to it therefore, that you diligently hearken *and* attend to what I say; for *the word which you hear* me speak, *is not* originally or merely *mine, but* it is [*the word*] *of the Father that sent me,* who has particularly given it in charge to me that I should thus insist upon practical and universal holiness, as one great end of my appearance.

my sayings: and the word which ye hear, is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 And accordingly you know that I have strongly insisted upon it as such; and *these things I have spoken to you* again and again, *while I con-*
26 *tinued* personally present *with you*: *But* when *the Comforter,* that I have promised you, is come; [*even*] *the Holy Spirit, whom the Father* after my departure *will send in my name,* to act as the great Agent in my cause, and to negotiate the affairs of my kingdom; *he shall teach you all things* which it is necessary for you to know, *and remind you of all things which I have said to you,* that you may not only recollect them in the fullest manner for your own instruction, but be able to record them for the edification
27 of my church in succeeding ages. In the mean time, as I am now departing from you, *peace I leave with you* as my legacy; and, as a blessing of the greatest moment and importance to you, *my peace I give unto you;* such a peace as none but I can impart, a peace with God and yourselves, as well as with your fellow-creatures, which will be the spring of solid and lasting happiness: and it is *not as the world* often *gives* and wishes peace, in an empty form of ineffectual, and often perhaps, unmeaning compliment, that *I give* it *unto you;* but, as I most sincerely wish it, I will most certainly secure it to you. *Let not your heart* therefore *be troubled* at the thoughts of my departure, *neither let it be afraid* of what may befall you when I am gone; for I will help you to possess your souls in quietness and peace, and will establish it upon the firmest basis.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 You need not then to be discouraged at the separation that will now be made between us; for as *you have heard how I* have *said to you,* that *I go away,* so also you have been informed of

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you,

SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 28.

I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I.

my intention in it, *and* know that I have added, I will *come* [*again*] *to you:* and surely *if you loved me* with a wise and rational affection, it would allay your sorrows in the mean time, and howsoever you might have a mournful sense of your own loss, *you would rejoice* on my account, *because I said, I go to the Father; for my Father*, whose servant I am as Mediator, *is* in this respect *greater than me*, and consequently it must be my honour and happiness to be in a state of greater nearness to him than the present world will admit.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

And now I have told you this, that I have been discoursing to you concerning my own removal, my return to the Father, and the descent of the Spirit upon you, *before it comes to pass; that when it does come to pass, you may* more firmly *believe*, not only on account of the extraordinary nature of the events themselves, but also on account of their exact and evident correspondence with these predictions of mine.[f] 29

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

It will be your wisdom the rather to observe and review these things, as *I shall not hereafter* have time to *discourse much* more *with you* about them; *for* Satan, *the prince of this* apostate *world, is coming* to encounter me, and is raising a storm against me which will quickly separate us: *nevertheless*, I have this comfort, that *he has nothing in me*, no guilt of mine to give him power over me, nor any inward corruption to take part with his temptation. 30

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise let us go hence.

But he is permitted thus to attack me, and I contentedly submit to my approaching sufferings, *that the world may* see and *know*, on the most substantial evidence, *that I love the Father* so well, as to refuse nothing whereby his glory may be advanced; *and even as the Father has commanded me, so I do*, how painful or expensive soever that obedience may be. And therefore, that we may be prepared for this hour of temptation that is coming upon us, *arise, let us go* from *hence*,[g] and retire to a place where we 31

[f] *You may* more firmly *believe*, not only on account, &c.] It is very judicially observed by Dr. Jenkin (in his excellent Defence of Christianity,) that when miraculous events are also the accomplishment of prophecies, the degree of evidence arising from them is the greatest that can possibly be conceived.

[g] *Arise, let us go hence.*] See note [s], in the next section.—That καὶ sometimes signifies *though*, or *nevertheless*, as I have rendered it, ver. 20, see note [e] on John xvii. 25, sect. clxxx.

SECT. CLXXIV. John XIV. 31.

may more conveniently attend our devotions; and where I may be ready, when my cruel enemies shall come to apprehend me, to yield myself into their hands, and to submit to what my Father has appointed for me.

IMPROVEMENT.

John xiv. 15, 21

SURELY, if we are not entirely strangers to the Divine life, we cannot read such discourses as these, without feeling some warm emotions of *love to Christ:* and if indeed we feel them, let us consider how they are to be expressed. Our Lord directs us to do it in the most solid, and the most acceptable manner, by a constant care to *keep his commandments;* and sure such *commandments* as *his* cannot be *grievous* to a soul that truly loves him: (1 John v. 3.) The more we live in the prac-
16, 17 tice of them, the more cheerfully may we expect the abundant *communications of his Spirit* to animate and strengthen us.

18 If we are *Christians* indeed, let us not, in any circumstance of life, look on ourselves as helpless and abandoned *orphans.* Human friends may forsake us; but *Christ will come to us:* he
21, 23 will *manifest himself* to the eye of faith, though to the eye of sense he is invisible; and his heavenly *Father will love us,* and watch over us for good: yea, he *will come and dwell* in the obedient soul by the gracious tokens of his intimate and inseparable presence. And do we any of us experience this? We have surely reason to say that by way of admiration which the *apostle*
22 said by way of inquiry, *Lord, how,* and whence *is it, that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?* What have we done to deserve these gracious and distinguishing manifestations! Nay, how much have we done to forfeit them! even more than many, from whom they are withheld!

27 With unutterable joy let us review this rich legacy of our dying Lord: *peace I leave with you: my peace I give unto you.* Lord, evermore give us *this peace* with God, and with our own consciences! for if *thou* wilt *give quietness, who can make trouble?* (Job xxxiv. 29.) How serenely may we then pass through the most turbulent scenes of life, when all is quiet and harmonious within! Thou hast *made peace through the blood of thy cross;* (Col. i. 20.) may we preserve the precious purchase and inestimable gift inviolate, till it issue in everlasting peace! In this let our *hearts* be encouraged; in this let them *rejoice;* and not in our own happiness alone, but also in that of our now glo-
28 rified and exalted *Redeemer.* As the members of his body, we ought certainly to maintain a pleasing sympathy with *our Head,* and to triumph in his honour and felicity as our own. *If we love Christ,* we should *rejoice, because he is gone to the Father*

And the same consideration may in its degree comfort us, when our pious friends are removed: if we *love them* with a rational and generous friendship, and are not too much influenced by selfish affections under that specious name, *our joy* for their exaltation will greatly temper the *sorrow* which our loss must give us. SECT. CLXXIV.

Our Lord uttered these words in the near views of a grievous assault from *the prince of this world*, who is the prince of darkness; but there was *no corruption in him*, to take part with the enemy. Too much, alas, does he find *in us* to abet his temptations: let us earnestly pray, that the *grace of Christ* may be *sufficient for us:* and that as *his love to the Father* engaged him to go through this painful conflict with the tempter, *his love to us* may make us partakers of his victory. *In his name* let us *set up our banners;* and the *powers of hell* shall flee before us. Ver. 30, 31

SECT. CLXXV.

Christ represents himself under the emblem of a vine, and exhorts his disciples to faith and persevering obedience. John XV. 1—11.

JOHN XV. 1.

I AM the true vine, SOME accident occasioning a little delay before they left the guest-chamber, in which they had eaten the passover, our Lord improved the precious moments in addressing his disciples to the following purpose:[a] *I am*, said he, *the true* and most excellent *vine*,[b] by its union with SECT. CLXXV. John XV. 1

[a] Some accident occasioning a little delay, &c.] This may be gathered from the conclusion of the foregoing chapter, where our Lord had said, *Arise, let us go hence*: for it seems very unreasonable to imagine, that our Lord would address so important a discourse as this to eleven persons, as they were walking, especially in the streets of Jerusalem, at this public time; much less would he pour out, so solemn a prayer as that in chap. xvii. in such a circumstance: yet John xviii. 1, (§ clxxxi.) strongly implies that all that follows between t[he] ; and that, happened bef[ore] he went [forth] from Jerusalem. I c[on]clude, th[erefore], that all this passed bef[ore] they qu[itted] the house where the passove[r] was eate[n], though they probably rose from the table as soon as those words, *Arise, let us go hence*, were spoken. A short delay might leave room for this; for any one who will make the trial, will find that these three chapters may be deliberately read over in a quarter of an hour, and therefore might be spoken in that small interval of time.

[b] *The true* and most excellent *vine.*] So *the true light*, (John i. 9.) and *the true bread*, (chap vi. 32.) evidently signifies (See Raphael. Annot. ex Xen. p. 141.)—His having lately drank with his disciples of the *fruit of the vine*, and having afterwards declared that he would *drink no more of it till he drank it new in the kingdom of God*, (Mark xiv. 25, page 430.) might possibly occasion Christ's alluding to it: (see Grotius in loc.) Or perhaps they might now be standing near a window, or in some court, by the side of the house, where the sight of a vine might suggest this beautiful simile. (Compare Psal. cxxviii. 3.) That circumstance was

SECT. CLXXV. John XV. 2

whom my church is nourished; *and my Father is the husbandman*, who has planted this vine, and by whom it is cultivated, that it may produce delightful clusters for his service. And *every branch* that is *in me* by an external profession, *which* yet is found to be a barren branch, and *bears no fruit, he taketh* quite *away*; that is, he cuts it off in his righteous judgment, *and* entirely separates it from me: but *every* [*branch*] *which brings forth fruit, he purgeth*, that is, he prunes and dresses it, and, on the whole, exercises such wise and kind discipline towards it, (though that discipline may sometimes seem severe,) as may best answer the great end of its production, *that it may bring forth* yet *more fruit*, than which there can be nothing more desirable.[c]

and my Father is husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 And thus it is with you; for *now* the traitor is gone out I may affirm, without the exception that I made before, (compare John xiii. 10, 11, § clxxi.) that *you are* all thus purged, in such a manner as to be *clean, by means of the word which I have spoken to you*, whose sanctifying 4 influence has operated on your hearts. *Continue* therefore *in me*, by the renewed exercise of humble faith and love; *and I* will be *in you*, to nourish and supply you, as from a living root, with every necessary grace: for *as*, in the natural world, *the branch cannot bear fruit of itself*, but must presently wither, *unless it continue in* a state of union with *the vine*, and be nourished by sap from thence; *so neither can you* be able to produce the fruits of genuine and acceptable obedience, *unless you continue in me*, and have the life of grace maintained within you by a vital union with me.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I repeat it again, as a matter of the utmost moment, That *I am the vine*, and *ye* [*are*] *the branches*, in the sense I have already explained.

5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches.

no doubt common in Judæa, which abounded with the finest grapes. See Gen. xlix. 11, 12; Numb. xiii. 23; and Deut. viii. 8.

[c] *That it may bring forth more fruit.*] This strongly suggests a very sublime and important thought, *viz.* that one of the noblest rewards God can bestow for former acts of obedience, is to make the soul yet more holy, and fit for farther and more eminent service, though it should be by such painful afflictions as resemble the pruning of a vine.

He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

SECT. CLXXV. John XV. 5.

He therefore *that abides in me* by such an intimate and vital union, *and* in whom also *I* abide by the operations of my Holy Spirit *in him, he,* and he only, *bringeth forth much fruit,* to the honour of his profession, and the comfort of his own soul: but the glory of it is still to be referred to me; *for separate from me you can do nothing,* though you stand in the foremost rank of my followers, and have already made some considerable attainments. And *if any one* that calls himself my disciple, *does not* maintain such a regard to me, as that he may be said to *abide in me,*[d] *he is* rejected and *cast out* with disdain and abhorrence, *as a* fruitless *branch* lopped off from the vine, *and* by consequence *is* presently *withered; and* as [*men*] *gather* up such dry sticks, *and throw them into the fire, and* there *they are burnt,* as a worthless kind of wood fit for nothing but fuel, (see Ezek. xv. 2—4.) so in like manner, such will be the end of those unhappy creatures; they shall be gathered as fit fuel for Divine wrath, and their external relation to me will not preserve them from everlasting burnings.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

6

But as for you my faithful servants, I assure you, for your encouragement, that, *if you* stedfastly *abide in me, and* take care that in consequence of it *my words abide in you,* so that you maintain a suitable regard to all my instructions, promises, and commands, this blessed union will entitle you to such signal degrees of the Divine favour, that *you shall ask* in prayer *whatsoever ye will, and,* if it be upon the whole subservient to your own happiness, and to the public good, *it shall be done for you.* And let it therefore be your care to make the suitable return of gratitude and obedience; for *in this is my Father* most eminently *glorified, that you,* my apostles, *bring forth much fruit,* by exerting yourselves to the utmost for the propagation of my gospel in the world, and endeavouring to enforce your instructions by the holiness of your lives: *and* in this likewise *you shall* ap-

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

7

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit;

8

[d] *If any one does not abide in me.*] It is strange that any should think this text a conclusive argument against the doctrine of perseverance; when to be in Christ, (ver. 2.) so plainly signifies making an external profession of Christianity, whether vain or sincere.

SECT. CLXXV.

pear to all to *be my* true *disciples*, and to act worthy of your character and relation to me.

so shall ye be my disciples.

John XV. 9.

And it is surely with the highest reason I would engage you to make this your aim: because *as the Father has loved me, so have I* also *loved you*; with the most constant and invariable affection: *continue* therefore *in my love*, and always be solicitous so to behave, as may, on your part, maintain the friendship inviolate.

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 And *if you* diligently and constantly *keep my commandments*, then *you will* assuredly *continue in my love; even as I have* always *kept my Father's commandments, and* so *continue in his love*; for this is the most solid evidence of it, which I give to my Father, and require from you.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 *These things I have spoken to you*, not to grieve you by any intimation that I suspect the sincerity of your regards to me; but that you may be so fortified and animated against the temptations of life, *that my joy* and complacency *in you*, as my faithful friends, *might* still *continue; and* [*that*] *your joy* in me *may be* maintained in its *full* height, and may greatly increase; as it certainly will, in proportion to the advancement of your resolution and zeal in my service.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. How desirable is it, that we may learn from this discourse to *regard Christ*, at all times, as the spiritual *Head*, from whom life and vigour are to be derived to all his people! Let us by the exercise of an unfeigned faith *abide in him as the true vine*; as 4, 5 being always sensible, that *without him we can do nothing*; and that, if we are *in him* only by an external profession, we are not 6 only in danger of being *cut off*, and *taken away*, but shall in the 2 end *be cast into the fire*. May we rather *be purged* and pruned, though it should be with the most painful dispensations of provi- 8 dence; if by this means our *fruitfulness* may be promoted *to the glory of God* and to the benefit of the world! May *his word* 3 operate daily upon us, to *cleanse* us from remaining pollutions, and if we thus desire to be *clean*, let us *take heed to our way, according to* the tenour of that *word*. (Psal. cxix. 9.)

7 We see our encouragement to *pray*; let us take it from *Christ*, and not be dismayed, nor yield to unbelieving suspicions. As 9 *the Father has loved Christ, so does he also love* his people. Let us preserve and cultivate this sacred friendship; and, whatever

it may cost us, let us endeavour to *continue in his love*, and to avoid whatever would forfeit it; making it above all things our care to *keep his commandments*. *Christ* always observing those of his heavenly *Father*, cannot but always and invariably *continue* the object of *his love* and delight; may our conduct be such, as that *he* may see reason to *rejoice in us*; and then *we* shall also have the surest foundation for a sublime and solid *joy*. SECT. CLXXV. Ver. 10.

SECT. CLXXVI.

Christ renews his exhortation to mutual love, and declares the Jews inexcusable in their unbelief. John XV. 12, *to the end.*

JOHN XV. 12.

SECT. CLXXVI. John XV. 12.

JOHN XV. 12. THIS is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.

OUR Lord, in order to impress the principles of mutual friendship and benevolence on the minds of his disciples in the most powerful manner, recommended it to them at large on this tender occasion, and proceeded in his discourse to the following purpose: *This is* in a peculiar manner *my commandment* to you, which, by all the obligations you are under to me, I charge and conjure you to observe, *That ye* all do most cordially and constantly *love one another; even* if it be possible, with as great an ardour *as* that with which *I have loved you;* so as to be ready to sacrifice your lives for each other, as I expose and resign mine for you. (Compare John xiii. 34; and 1 John iii. 16.) And surely I can give no more solid and important evidence of my affection to you; for *no man has* ever manifested, or can indeed imagine, *greater* and more disinterested *love than this, that a man should* be willing not only on some sudden alarm to hazard, but on the coolest deliberation to submit to *lay down his life for* the preservation and happiness of *his friends*. Now as I am about to give you this grand demonstration of my love, so I assure you, that *you are*, and shall be acknowledged as *my friends*, and shall certainly share in the blessings of my death and life, *if you* practically acknowledge my authority, and are so influenced by my love as to *do whatsoever I command you*. *I do not any longer call you servants*, though I have sometimes used the phrase, and formerly have seen it necessary in some points to treat you with reserve *for the*

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants;

SECT. CLXXVI. John XV. 15.

servant is not let into the secrets of his master, and *knoweth not* particularly *what his lord doth*:[a] *but I have* not only in words *called you* my *friends*, (Luke xii. 4. sect. cxi.) but on the whole have treated you as such; *for all things that I have heard*, and received in charge *from my Father, I have*, so far as was convenient, *declared to you*[b] in the most condescending and endearing manner, as you very well know.

for the servant knoweth not what his lord doth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Remember that *you have not* first *chosen me, but I* by my sovereign and effectual grace *have chosen you* to the honourable office of my apostles, and ambassadors; *and have* appointed and *ordained you, that you should go* and publish what you have heard from me to all the world, *and* be so qualified and assisted, that you may *bear* abundant *fruit* in the most distant countries, *and* [*that*] the blessed effect of *your fruit should continue* even to the remotest generations:[c] yea, I have also raised you to such a happy circumstance, and made you so eminently the favourites of heaven, *that*, as I lately told you, (ver. 7.) *whatever you shall ask the Father in my name, he may* perform it for you; and you may certainly depend upon it he will *give it you.*

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 But then again I would remind you, that if you would continue thus the objects of these his gracious regards, you must carefully practise your duty to each other as well as to him; for *these things I command you, that ye love*

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

[a] *I do not any longer call you servants: for the servant knoweth not*, &c.] Mr. Locke, (in his Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 105.) refers this to the caution with which our Lord had spoken of his being the Messiah; some instances of which have been already pointed out. See note [r] on John iv. 26, Vol. I. p. 173.

[b] *All things that I have heard from my Father I have declared to you.*] Our Lord had, no doubt, the fullest view of the scheme of redemption undertaken by him; but the apostles not being yet able to bear many things, (compare chap. xvi. 12, sect. clxxvii.) especially relating to the calling of the Gentiles, and the abolition of the Mosaic law, he wisely deferred the discovery of them: so that these words must be taken with the limitation mentioned in the paraphrase, and signify that he had done it so far as was convenient.

[c] *That you should go and bear fruit*, &c.] This was a security to them that they should be preserved from immediate dangers, and that their life should be guarded by Providence till some considerable services had been accomplished by their means.—When our Lord adds, that your fruit should continue, he may allude to the custom of keeping rich and generous wines a great many years, so that in some cases (which was especially applicable to the sweet eastern wines) they might prove a cordial to those who were unborn when the grapes were produced. In this view there is a beautiful propriety in the representation, which I hope will be particularly felt when these reviving chapters are read.

SECT. CLXXVI.

one another; and thus you should the rather do, as you will be the mark of common hatred and persecution. Yet *if* you find *the world hate* and injure *you*, you have no reason to be offended or surprised at this; for *you know, that* mild and benevolent as my conduct has always been, yet *it has hated me* your Chief and Lord,[d] *before* it discharged its venom and malignity on *you*. Indeed *if you were* like the rest *of the world*, and your doctrines and practice were conformable to its customs and maxims, *the world* is so generally under the power of selfish prejudices, that it undoubtedly *would love its own*, and you might expect much better treatment from it:[e] *but because* this is not your character, and *you are not* thus *of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world*, not only to separate from, but to oppose its vices and enormities, and even to be leaders in that holy and necessary opposition, it is no wonder that *upon this account the world hateth you*, though the cause in which you are engaged be indeed so honourable, and your lives so useful and beneficent.

John XV. 18

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

19 If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

Remember, and recollect upon this occasion, *the word which I spake to you* some time ago, (Mat. x. 24; and Luke vi. 40.) and which I have but lately repeated, (John xiii. 16.) *The servant is not greater than his lord*, nor the messenger greater than him that sent him: *if* therefore *they have persecuted me*, and providence

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they

[d] *It has hated me your Chief.*] The words in the original (ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἐμεμίσηκεν,) which we render, *It hated me before* it hated *you*, may (as Dr. Lardner well observes,) be more literally rendered, *It hated me your Chief*; which makes the expression more lively and exactly parallel to Mat. x. 24, 25; sect. lxxv. (See Lard. Credib. part. 1. Vol. II. p. 693.) Thus ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγω, (1 Tim. i. 15.) is well translated, *of whom I am chief.*

[e] *If you were of the world, the world would love its own.*] This seems to me a strong intimation, that even in nations which profess Christianity, if true religion fall, as it very possibly may, to a very low ebb, they that exert themselves remarkably for the revival of it, must, on the very principle here laid down, expect hatred and opposition; and that the passages in scripture relating to persecution are not so peculiar to the first ages, or to Christians living in idolatrous countries, as some have supposed. Would to God, the malignity to be found in some of us against our brethren, did not too plainly illustrate this remark! Men will probably experience the truth of it, in proportion to the degeneracy of those around them, and to the vigour and resolution with which they bear their testimony against prevailing errors and vices. Yet it is certain, that the imprudence and bigotry of some very good men has sometimes made matters worse than they would otherwise have been, and perhaps has irritated the vices of their enemies, so as in part to have been accessary to their own damage, and the much greater mischief of those that have injured them.

SECT. CLXXVI. John XV. 20

has permitted them to do it, you may reasonably conclude *they will also persecute you*, and cannot justly complain if you have your share of sufferings; and *if* you have seen that *they have* generally *kept my saying*, I will give you leave to suppose *they will also keep yours*.[f]

will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 *But* when you see, as you very quickly will, not only my doctrine rejected, but my person assaulted, abused, and murdered, it must be a sensible warning to you to prepare for the like usage; and *all these things they will* in fact *do to you, for my name's sake, because they do not know him that sent me;* for their ignorance of that God to whom they boast so near a relation, does indeed lie at the bottom of their opposition to me.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 And a dreadful account they will have to give for it; for *if I had not come and spoken* thus plainly *to them, they would* comparatively *have had no sin*;[g] *but now they have no excuse* or pretence *for their sin*, but, being committed against so clear and strong a light, it stands exposed in its most odious colours:

22 If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

23 Yea, it appears rebellion against God, as well as ingratitude to me; for *he that hateth* and opposeth *me, hateth* and opposeth *my Father also*, whose commission I bear;[h] and this is what they have done, after all reasonable methods have been taken for their conviction.

23 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

24 If I had wrought no miracle at all, nay, *if I had not done among them such* extraordinary *works as no other man* ever *did*, not even their prophets, or Moses himself, *they had*

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they

[f] *If they have kept my saying*, &c.] I am surprised that such a multitude of learned commentators, and among the rest Gataker and Knatchbull, should contend that τηρειν λογον should here be understood of observing a person's discourse with a malignant design to carp at it. (See Wolfius in loc.) Ηαραδηρειν has indeed that sense, Mark iii. 2; Luke vi. 7; xiv. 15; xx. 20. But no certain argument can be drawn from hence, especially considering how constantly the phrase before us is taken in a good sense, for an obedient regard, in this very discourse, in which it often occurs. See John xiv. 15, 21, 23; xv. 10, xvii. 6.

[g] *They would have had no sin.*] It is so evident from the word of God (see Rom. i. 20, 21; and ii. 12—15,) as well as from the reason of things, that sin may be imputed to those who have no revelation, that it is most evident this is only a Hebraism; as when, according to the pathetic manner of speaking, especially in use among the eastern nations, that is said to be nothing at all, which, when compared with something else, is inconsiderably small. See Psal. xxxix. 5; Isa. xl. 17; 1 Cor. i. 28; iii. 7; and compare John ix. 41.

[h] *Hateth my Father also.*] How much is it to be wished, that those who make light of Christ, while they pretend a great veneration for the Father, would seriously attend to this weighty admonition, lest haply they be found even to fight against God! (Acts v. 39.)

had not had sin: but now they have both seen, and hated both me and my Father.

not had any degree of *sin*, comparable to that which they are now under; *but now*, as they have rejected my superior miracles, which they have seen with their own eyes, at the same time that they own the evidence of those which Moses wrought, of which they have heard only by distant report, they manifest such an obstinate perverseness of temper, that I may truly say, *they have both seen, and hated both me and my Father;* and God himself will justly resent and punish it, as an indignity that shews their enmity to him. *But* [*this is all permitted,*] *that the word which is written in their law*, or in their sacred volume, concerning David, (Psal. xxxv. 19.) *might* eminently *be fulfilled* in me, as many ancient prophecies foretold that it should, "*Surely they have hated me without a cause.*"[i]

SECT. CLXXVI. John XV. 24.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

25

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which, proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

But when the Comforter is come, whom, as I told you, (chap. xiv. 26.) *I will* shortly *send to you from the Father*, [*even*] *the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father*, and is to reside in my church, *he shall bear* a convincing *testimony to me*, to vindicate my character from all the infamy they are maliciously attempting to throw upon it.

26

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

And you also, weak as you now appear, *shall* by his powerful assistance *bear* a courageous and convincing *testimony* to me, *because you have been with me from the beginning* of my ministry, and therefore are the best qualified to give an account of my whole conduct; which the better it is known, the more it will justify my cause, and expose the wickedness of those that rise up against me.

27

IMPROVEMENT.

THE Son of God condescends to speak under the character of a *Friend;* and with what humble gratitude should we attend

Ver. 15

[i] *They have hated me without a cause.*] It appears to me very evident, that Psal. xxxv. cannot be, strictly speaking, a prophecy concerning the Messiah, especially from ver. 13, 14, which represent a person incapable of helping others in their sickness, otherwise than by fasting and prayer; whereas Christ, (and, so far as we can find, he alone) had a power of working miracles whenever he pleased. Nevertheless, that the enemies of the Messiah should hate him without a cause, was expressly foretold, (Isa. liii. 3—9; Dan. ix. 26; and Zech. xii. 10;) not to mention the argument arising from comparing all the places in which his innocence and holiness are described, with those which refer to his sufferings. So that I apprehend the turn given in the paraphrase sufficiently justified.

SECT. CLXXVI. to his words! He lays aside the majesty of a sovereign to assume this more tender relation; and surely our overflowing hearts must inquire, blessed *Jesus*, what shall we do to express the friendship on our side? Let us observe what he has here declared, *Ye are my friends* indeed, *if ye do whatever I command you.* Lord, we *will run the way of* these *thy commandments, when* on this noblest principle *thou shalt enlarge our hearts!* (Psal. cxix. 32.)

Ver. 14.

12, 13 He has *loved us* with an unexampled affection, which has approved itself *stronger than death;* and, in return, he requires us to *love one another.* How gracious a *command!* How merciful to our fellow-creatures and to ourselves, who should infallibly feel the benefit of the practice of it, both in the delight inseparable from benevolent affections, and in the circulation of kind and friendly offices, which, degenerate as human nature is, few are so abandoned as not to endeavour to repay! Who would not imagine that the whole *world* should feel and obey the charm!

18, 25 And yet, instead of this, behold, they *hate Christ,* and his servants *for his sake,* though *without a cause,* and against the strongest engagements. Miserable creatures! who by a necessary consequence, whatever they may fondly imagine, *hate the Father also,* and stand daily and hourly exposed to all the dreadful terrors of an almighty enemy.

23, 24

19, 20 Let us not wonder *if the world hate us;* nor greatly regard, if it injure us. *We are not of the world,* nor *is the servant greater than his lord:* but surely the opposition which the gospel brings along with it, is nothing, when compared with those blessings which it entails on all who faithfully embrace it. Were the sufferings and difficulties a thousand times greater than they are, we ought to esteem *the Pearl of price,* the most happy purchase at any rate; and to be daily returning our most thankful acknowledgments, that *Christ* sent forth *his apostles,* qualified with such a knowledge of himself, and assisted by such power from his Spirit, *appointing them to go and bring forth fruit,* even *fruit* which *should remain* to the remotest ages. Through his guardian care it still remains in the world: Oh may it flourish more abundantly among us! and may its efficacy on our hearts and lives be more apparent! And may Divine grace convince those who now reject and oppose it, that in the midst of such various evidence of his having *come and spoken to them, they have no cloak for their sin!* but with whatever fond excuses they may amuse themselves and others, it will quickly appear, that *the bed is too short to stretch themselves on it, and the covering too narrow to wrap themselves in.* (Isa. xxviii. 20.)

26

22

SECT. CLXXVII.

Christ warns his disciples of the sufferings they must expect, and labours to reconcile them to the thoughts of his remove, as what would on the whole be advantageous to them, as the occasion of sending the Spirit, which would be so great a support to them and their cause. John XVI. 1—15.

JOHN XVI. 1.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

JOHN XVI. 1.

CHRIST farther added in his discourse to his disciples, *These things I have spoken to you* concerning the opposition which you are to expect from the world, and the proportionable supports you will receive from the Spirit, *that* when the storm arises, *you may not be offended* and discouraged, and much less be drawn to renounce your profession, in order to avoid the danger. *They shall* indeed excommunicate, or *cast you out of the synagogues; yea*, that is not all, for *the hour is* shortly *coming, that whosoever killeth you*,[a] *shall think that he offers* [*an acceptable*] *service to God*:[b] to so mad a rage

SECT. CLXXVII. John XVI. 1.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.

[a] *Whosoever killeth you.*] As the lower kinds of excommunication among the Jews were attended only with separation from synagogue worship, and from family converse, (Luke vi. 22.) or, in cases of greater guilt, with confiscation of goods and forfeiture of all their substance, (Ezra x. 8.) the highest kind of it was a capital sentence, (Lev. xxvii. 29;) the execution of which, when regularly pronounced, was indeed an act of duty and obedience to God, while they had the power of [illegible]nd death in their hands: but after it was wrested from them, some might perhaps think it an act of very acceptable piety and zeal, to attempt such executions, though at the hazard of their own lives, (of which the forty conspirators against Paul do therefore so boldly avow a design, even to the high-priest, as if it were meritorious, rather than criminal; Acts xxiii. 14, 15.) And to such sort of facts these words of our Lord may peculiarly relate.—Permit me to digress so far as to add, that I apprehend, in other cases after they were thus disarmed of the power of life and death, they had (as I may elsewhere prove) a dependence upon the interposition of providence to add that efficacy to their censures, which their power, infringed as it was, could not give: in reference to which, this highest sentence of excommunication was in the decline of their state called *Anathema Maran-atha*, or a sentence which the Lord would remarkably come to execute, though they themselves could not carry into effect. St. Paul therefore, with a peculiar beauty and propriety (but never, so far as I can find, fully explained,) applies it to a crime not capable of conviction before any human judges; even the want of a sincere love to Christ, though under a Christian profession. See 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

[b] *Shall think that he offers* [*an acceptable*] *service to God.*] The words λατρειαν προσφερειν τω Θεω might (as Abp. Leighton observes.) be rendered, *offers an oblation* or sacrifice *to God.* This intimates, as that excellent man glosses on the text (Serm. xvii. p. 302.) that "the servants of Christ "should be considered not only as sheep "for the slaughter, but as sheep for the "altar too." The rage of persecuting enemies, and, beyond all comparison, the murders committed by papal cruelty in the name of the Lord, in their hecatombs of whole burnt offerings, (if I may be allowed an expression which falls so far

SECT. CLXXVII. John XVI. 3.

shall their zeal arise, and so thick is the darkness with which their minds are veiled. *And* all *these* cruel *things they will do unto you, because they have not known either the Father, or me;* which if they had done, instead of injuring me, and exercising such inhumanities towards you, my apostles, they would have received us with
4 the greatest pleasure and thankfulness. *But I have spoken these things* plainly *to you*, and forewarned you of them, *that when the season comes* in which they shall happen, *you may remember that I told you of them;* and so may turn what has so discouraging an aspect into a farther confirmation of your faith. *And I did not* indeed *say these things to you from the beginning* of my ministry, *because I was* then *with you*, and could easily suggest proper instructions and consolations, as new circumstances of
5 difficulty arose: *But now* I speak them, because *I am* departing from you for a while, and am *going away to him that sent me* into the world; *and yet none of you asketh me, Whither dost thou go?* nor is concerned to make those inquiries about that better world where we are to dwell together, which surely might well be-
6 come you in such a circumstance. *But because I have spoken these things unto you*, and talked of leaving you for a time, your natural affections have been greatly moved, and *sorrow has filled* and pierced *your* very *hearts*, so that you seem almost stupified with it.
7 *But I tell you the* exact *truth* of the case, when I say that *it is* on the whole *advantageous to you*, as well as proper for me, *that I should go away*, considering the agreement made between the Father and me in the council of peace between us; *for if I do not go away*, and appear in heaven under the character of the great High-Priest, *the Comforter will not come to you*, since the gift of the Spirit is the fruit of my purchase, and is appointed to be consequent upon my being glorified, (John vii. 39, sect. ci.) *but when I go* from hence, *I will* not
8 fail to *send him to you. And when he comes,*

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things I have told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove

short of the dreadful truth,) too justly illustrate the remark. But how God will resent the murder of his children, upon his altar, the day when he makes inquisition for blood will declare.

the world of sin and of righteousness, and of judgment:

he will abundantly display the efficacy of his grace, not only in the comforts he will give you under all your troubles, but in the wonderful success with which he will enable you to carry on my cause; and will effectually *convince the world*, by your ministry,[c] *of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.* He will convince the world *of* that aggravated *sin* which they are guilty of, *because they do not believe in me;* to the truth of whose mission he will bear an unanswerable testimony by his enlightening influences and miraculous operations. He will convince them *of* my *righteousness* and innocency; *because* it will evidently appear that *I go to my Father*, and am accepted of him, when I send the Spirit from him in so glorious a manner; (compare Acts ii. 33, and Rom. i. 4.) *and* that my righteousness may therefore be relied on for the justification and acceptance of my people, since *you see me no more* appearing among you in the form of a servant, but are assured that, having finished what I was to do on earth, I am taken up to heaven, and received into glory. *And* he will convince them *of* my being invested with the power of executing *judgment; because the prince of this world*, the great head of the apostacy, *is* now as it were already *judged* and condemned, and shall then be triumphed over in a very remarkable manner, when his oracles are silenced, and he is cast out from many persons, and countries too, which he before possessed: (compare John xii. 31, sect. cxlviii.) And Satan being thus divested of his power, my gospel shall be propagated through the world, and a full proof at length be given of my sovereign authority, in my coming to execute judgment upon all ungodly sinners.

I have yet many other *things to say to you*, with relation to matters of considerable moment in the settlement of my church: *but* I wave them at present, because I know that *you are not able to bear* [*them*] *now*, and are not yet prepared

SECT. CLXXVII

John XVI. 8

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

9

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

10

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

11

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

12

[c] *He will convince the world.*] So the word ἐλεγξει properly signifies. Compare John viii. 9, 46; 1 Cor. xiv. 24; Tit. i. 9; and Jam ii. 9.—For the illustration of this, and the following verses, see Archbishop Tillotson's Works, Vol. III. p. 287—289.

SECT. CLXXVII

to receive them.[d] *But when he,* [*even*] *the Spirit of truth, is come,* according to the promise I have given you, *he,* as a faithful Guide, *will lead you into all* necessary *truth: for he will not* exceed his commission, and, like a careless or unfaithful messenger, *speak* merely *of himself; but,* like a wise and good ambassador, *whatsoever he shall hear* and receive in charge, [*that*] *will he speak; and he will shew you things to come,* as far as may be necessary to prepare and qualify you for the great work you shall be called to; and will acquaint you with future events, the prediction of which, as delivered by you, may be a lasting testimony to the truth of my gospel. And *he shall* indeed *glorify me* in the most signal manner; *for he will take of mine,* or of those doctrines which relate to me, and those benefits which I procure and bestow, *and will* reveal and *shew* [*it*] *to you* in the most clear and attractive light. And indeed *all things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine;* and *therefore,* to express the whole system of evangelical truth, *I said* unto you, *that he will take of mine, and will shew* [*it*] *to you;* since whatsoever he reveals to you in the name of God, may be called mine, as all truth proceeds from me, and all real goodness is my cause and interest in the world.

John XVI. 13

13 Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself: but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 2 How great is the ignorance and folly of them that *persecute* their brethren *in the name of the Lord,* and *kill* his dear children under the *pretence of offering him* an acceptable *sacrifice!* Thus 3 were the *apostles* treated by those that *knew not* the *God* for whom they professed all this burning zeal. Let us bless God that we are providentially sheltered from those effects of it which might otherwise bear so hard upon us; and let us diligently watch over our hearts, that no irregular affections may work there, and no uncharitable sentiments be harboured. When,

[d] *But you are not able to bear them now.*] Those other things to which our Lord refers, might probably relate to the abrogation of the ceremonial law, to the doctrine of justification by faith, the rejection of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, and the like; which might have given some offence to the disciples, till their remaining prejudices were removed. However, the prudence of Christ in this respect is an excellent pattern for ministers; and we had need to pray earnestly for the instructions and assistances of the Spirit of God, that we may neither forget nor abuse it.

like the *apostles* our *hearts* are *filled with sorrow* let us be cautious that they may not be *stupified* by it, so that any call of duty should pass unheard, or any opportunity of religious advancement unimproved; and let us not be indolent in our *inquiries* into the meaning of those dispensations which we do not understand; but seriously consider whether we are not *sorrowful* for that which is indeed designed for our *advantage*, and in the issue will be matter of *rejoicing* to us. SECT. CLXXVII. Ver. 5, 6, 7

We hear to what purposes *the Comforter* was *sent*. His *coming* was designed in a peculiar manner for the *advantage* of the *apostles*; and was of greater service to them than the continuance of *Christ*'s presence with them in the body would have been, not only to support and *comfort* them under all their *trials*, but to acquaint them with *all* necessary *truth*, and fully to instruct them in the mysteries of Godliness. And he *came* also for the conviction of an *apostate* world; for the important errand he was sent upon, was to awaken mens' minds, and to *convince them* of their own guilt, and of *Christ's righteousness*, and of that awful *judgment* which should be executed on the most inveterate of his enemies. Let us often think of the force of the *Spirit's testimony* to the truth of *Christianity*, and endeavour to understand it in all its extent. Let us bless God, that the gospel, and the character of his Son, were thus vindicated; and rejoice in the views of that complete conquest, to which *Satan* is already adjudged. In the mean-time, let us earnestly pray, that the influences of the *Holy Spirit* may be communicated to us in such a manner, that *Christ* may be *glorified* in us, and we in him; and that the *things of Christ* may be *taken and shewn to us* by that *Spirit*; for it can only be done by means of *his* influence and operations. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15

SECT. CLXXVIII.

Our Lord concludes his discourse with assuring his disciples that his separation from them would not be final, but that he would still act in their favour as their Guardian, and make them finally victorious. John XVI. 16, *to the end.*

JOHN XVI. 16.

A LITTLE while and ye shall not see me, and again, a little while and ye

JOHN XVI. 16.

OUR Lord continued and concluded this excellent discourse to his apostles in words to the following purpose: It is yet but *a little while*, *and you shall not see me* any more conversing with you upon earth, as I have hitherto done: *and* yet *again* for your encouragement and comfort, I assure you, that it is but *a little while* longer, *and you shall see me* again, on SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 16.

SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 16

terms of much greater advantage, *because I go to the Father;* plainly intimating thereby, that he would be so mindful of their interest with the Father, as ere long to bring them to an eternal abode with him.[a]

shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 But their thoughts were so taken up about other things, and they had still such expectations of his establishing an earthly kingdom, that, notwithstanding what he now had said was far from being obscure, they did not at first penetrate into the meaning of it: [*some*] *of his disciples therefore said one to another, What is this that he says to us? A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while and ye shall see me; and* why does he add, *Because I go to the Father?*[b] *They said therefore* among themselves, *What is this little while of which he speaks? we know not what he says,* and cannot apprehend what he means by it.

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, a little while and ye shall not see me: and, again, a little while and ye shall see me: and because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

19 *Now Jesus,* as the secret workings of their hearts were open to his view, *knew that they were desirous to ask him* for some farther expli-

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and

[a] Intimating—he would bring them to an eternal abode, &c.] As this sense is evidently much more important, so it appears to me more natural and easy than that of Mons. Le Clerc, who understands it as if Christ had said, "Though I am "quickly to disappear from you, and be "lodged in the grave, I shall soon come "again, and make you another visit of "some length, before I return to heaven "by my ascension." His going to the Father was no proof of this, though it strongly proved his ability to introduce them to the heavenly world. I apprehend that the whole joy which Christ's resurrection and ascension, as connected with each other, gave them, is referred to in the following discourse, which therefore is so paraphrased, as to include all that is pertinent and material in the explication above.

[b] *What is this that he says,* &c.] There are so many passages in the preceding parts of this discourse which relate to Christ's going to his Father (chap. xiv. 2, 12, 28; xv. 26; xvi. 10), that it is a strange instance of the dulness of the apostles that they did not understand him here. Perhaps it is recorded on purpose to shew what an alteration the Spirit afterwards made in them.—It is indeed difficult to imagine what could perplex them, unless it were that they suspected the words, *A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while and ye shall see me,* &c. might intimate that after he had gone to the Father, and made a short stay there, he would come again, and settle an earthly kingdom; and they might desire an explication in this view. Accordingly after having told them that, though they were sorrowful, he would come and see them again after his resurrection (ver. 20, 22), and would introduce them to a state of comfortable converse with God by prayer, and a joy, of which none should deprive them (ver. 23—27,) he adds (ver. 28), that he was quickly leaving the world, to go and reside with the Father, from whom he came; thereby gently intimating, that no temporal reign was to be expected. And if we suppose him thus to have glanced obliquely at the most secret sentiments of their hearts, it will account for that confession of his omniscience which immediately follows this 28th verse (ver. 29. 30); the reason of which would not appear merely from his discovery, that they doubted about something which their countenances and whispers might shew.

said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while and ye shall see me?

cation of what he had been saying, and yet that they were afraid of being upbraided for the slowness of their apprehensions; and therefore kindly prevented their confusion, *and said to them, Do you inquire of one another concerning this which I said, A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while and ye shall see me?* Surely, if you reflect a little, it cannot be very difficult to understand the meaning of that. SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 19

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall shortly *weep and lament* for a while, on account of my being taken away from you,[c] *and* in the mean time *the world shall rejoice*, as if it had prevailed against me; *and you shall be sorrowful* at the loss of my presence, *but* then you have this to comfort you in that interval of distress, that *your sorrow shall* quickly *be turned into joy.* 20

21 A woman, when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

Just as *a woman, when she is in labour, has* great anxiety and *sorrow because her hour* of distress and agony *is come; but when she has brought forth a child, she* forgets the pangs she endured, and *remembereth* [*her*] *tribulation no more, for joy that a man is born into the world,* and added to her family for its future honour and support. 21

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you.

And so it is, that *you indeed have sorrow now*, in expectation of the melancholy scene which is approaching; and it will very much increase your trouble to see me in a few hours more torn away from you, with inhuman violence, hung as a malefactor on the cross, and buried in the grave: *but* when your hopes are at the lowest ebb, *I will* quickly *see you again*, after my resurrection, *and your hearts shall rejoice; and* afterwards, though I am absent from you in the body, yet I will fill you with such consolation by my Spirit, that *no one shall*, by any means whatever, *deprive you of your joy*, which shall sweetly mingle itself even with your heaviest afflictions.[d] 22

[c] *Ye shall weep and lament*, &c.] Whatever immediate reference this may have to the sorrows of the apostles, immediately on the death of Christ, before his resurrection, I question not but it includes all their subsequent afflictions in the days of fasting, when the bridegroom was taken away from them, as it is elsewhere expressed in a parallel phrase, (Mat. ix. 15.) which must express much more than the abstinence of the one day he lay in the grave, supposing (which is very possible) they had then but little relish to their food. See Vol. I. p. 391.

[d] *No one shall deprive you of your joy.*] As this promise will be for ever accomplished to all Christ's faithful servants, so it is observable how the apostle Paul, in

SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 23

And in that day, when I have sent the Comforter, *you shall not inquire anything of me*,[e] nor be puzzled with much greater difficulties than those which I have been explaining; but Divine illuminations shall be poured in upon you in the richest abundance, and with it the spirit of earnest and successful prayer; for *verily, verily, I say unto you*, and repeat the important assurance which I before gave you, (chap. xiv. 13, 14, and xv. 16.) *That whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give* [*it*] *you.*

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing; verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

24 *Hitherto ye have* not been used to regard me under the character of a Mediator between God and man, and therefore have *asked nothing in my name;* but then, having received a fuller revelation of the doctrine of my intercession, you may come with a cheerful boldness to the throne of grace, and freely *ask* whatever shall be necessary for you; *and* depend upon it *you shall receive* such a liberal supply, *that* in the midst of all your temporal discouragements, *your joy* in God *may* still *be* maintained in its *full* height.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 *These* weighty and important *things I have* often *spoken to you in* the obscurity of *parables*, which have appeared dark and mysterious to you; *but the hour* or time *is coming when I will speak no more to you in parables* or dark sayings, *but I will tell you what relates to the Father with* all openness and *plainness* of speech. *In that day you shall ask in my name*, and shall present your supplications to the Father with an express acknowledgment of your dependence upon me for the success of your petitions; *and I do not* merely *say to you, that I will ask the Father on your account*, and plead with him for the acceptance of your prayers, though you may assure

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

his more abundant afflictions, attests his experience of its truth, when he says, As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing, (2 Cor. vi. 10.) and mentions his share in the joy of Christians as a most important and sacred oath. (1 Cor. xv. 31.)

[e] *You shall not inquire any thing of me.*] We render it *ask*; but I thought it proper to make some distinction between ἐρωτᾶω, which properly signifies *to make an inquiry*, and αἰτέω, which is *to present a request*. See Dr Calamy on the Trinity, p. 154. Yet I confess the former is sometimes used almost in the same sense with the latter; (see Mat. xvi. 1.) and the word seems to have the same ambiguity with *demand* in English.—The argument some have drawn from hence against praying to Christ, on the preceding criticism, has no appearance of weight; and did ἐρωτᾶω signify *to pray*, would prove, (if it proved any thing) that Paul lived, and Stephen died, in a very unwarrantable, and perhaps an idolatrous, practice.

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

yourselves that I shall always be ready to do it; But I represent it not to you in such a view, as if every favour were obtained, and as it were extorted, merely by my importunity, from one who has himself no regard for your happiness; *for*, on the contrary, I assure you, that *the Father himself* most tenderly *loves you*, and therefore will be ready to grant your requests, and to watch over you with paternal affection and care; *because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God*, as the messenger of his grace to men; and have accordingly relied upon me with such stedfastness, that you have ventured your all upon that belief. And you have therein acted a very prudent and happy part; for *I* indeed *came out from the Father, and am come into the world* to scatter a divine light upon it, and to conduct men into the paths of life and peace: and now *again*, having dispatched my errand, *I am leaving the world, and am going* back *to the Father;* where I shall keep my stated abode, and whether I will shortly conduct you to a more glorious kingdom than you ever expected here. This is the sum of what I have been telling you, and was particularly my meaning in what I said before, (ver. 16,) "Yet a little while, and ye shall see me again, "because I go to the Father"

SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 27

28 I came forth from the Father and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

28

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

And *his disciples*, struck with the correspondence of what he said to what was secretly passing in their own minds, *said to him*, Lord, *Behold, now thou speakest* very *plainly* to us, *and usest no parable*, or obscure form of expression; so that we clearly understand thy meaning, and rejoice in it. And *now we know* by this further token, even thy discerning our inmost doubts on this head, *that thou knowest all things, and hast no need that any one should ask thee* any particular questions, to inform thee of those scruples which thou seest when first rising in the mind: *on this account* therefore, *we* firmly *believe that thou camest out from God.*

29

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

30

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Jesus answered them, Do you now at length *believe?* and do you apprehend your faith to be so firm, that nothing shall be able any more to shake it? Let me advise you not to be too confident; for I assure you, that in a very little

31

SECT. CLXXVIII. John XVI. 32

time you will be found to act, as if you had not any faith in me: pray therefore, that God would fortify you against those trials of which I have warned you once and again. For *behold, the hour is coming, yea,* is so near at hand, that I may even say, it *is now come, that you shall* all *be scattered* and dispersed, and *every one* of you return *to your own* habitations and employments, or otherwise shift for yourselves as well as you can; *and* to consult your own security, you *shall* flee away and *leave me alone;* but *yet I am not,* properly speaking, *alone, for the Father is with me,* and he will comfort and support me, in the absence of all human friends.

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 *These things have I spoken* thus largely *to you, that* whatever difficulties may arise in life, having been thus warned, and furnished with such consolations as these, *you might have* lasting *peace* and serenity of soul by the exercise of your faith *in me. In the world* indeed *you shall have,* and must expect *affliction; but be courageous* and cheerful in your combat, for *I have* myself *overcome the world;* and, being possessed of a power infinitely superior to it, I will make you partakers in my victory over all its terrors and its snares.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 16 WE are, perhaps, often regretting the *absence* of *Christ,* and looking back with emulation on the happier lot of those who conversed with him on earth in the days of his flesh: but if we are true *believers* in an *unseen Jesus,* it is but *a little while and we shall* also *see him;* for he *is gone to the Father,* and will so successfully negociate our affairs there, that whatever our present difficulties and sorrows are, they shall end more happily 21 than those of a *woman,* who after all the pangs and throes of her *labour,* through the merciful interposition of Divine Providence, is made the *joyful mother of a living child.*

20 In the mean time, we have surely no reason to envy *the world* its *joys* and triumphs: alas, its season of *weeping* will quickly come! But *our lamentations* are soon to be *turned into songs of* 22 *praise,* and *our hearts* to be filled with that solid, sacred, and peculiar *joy,* which, being the gift of *Christ,* can *never be taken away.*

23 While we are in this state of distance and darkness, let us rejoice that we have *access* to the *throne of grace,* through the prevailing *name of Christ.* Let us come thither with holy courage

and confidence, and *ask*-that we may *receive;* and so our *joy* SECT.
may be full. With what pleasure may we daily renew our vi- CLXXVIII.
sits *to that throne*, before which Jesus stands as an intercessor; Ver. 24.
to that throne which is possessed by *the Father*, who *him-* 26, 27.
self loveth us, and answers with readiness and delight those *pe-*
titions which are thus recommended! May our *faith in Christ*, —27
and our *love to him*, be still on the increasing hand; and our
supplications will be more and more acceptable to him, whose
loving kindness is better than life! (Psal. lxiii. 3.)

Surely we shall be frequently reviewing these gracious *dis-*
courses which *Christ* has bequeathed us as an invaluable legacy. 33—
May they dwell with us in all our solitude, and comfort us in
every distress! We shall have no reason to wonder if human —32
friendship be sometimes false, and always precarious; the *disci-*
ples of Christ were *scattered* in the day of his extremity, and
left him alone, when they were under the highest obligations to
have adhered to him with the most inviolable fidelity. May we
but be able like him to say, that our *Father is with us;* and that
delightful converse with God, which we may enjoy in our most
solitary moments, will be a thousand times more than an equi- 33
valent for whatsoever we lose in the creatures. *In the world* we
must indeed *have tribulation;* and he that has appointed it for
us, knows that it is fit we should; but since *Jesus, the Captain*
of our salvation, who was *made perfect through sufferings*, has
overcome the world, and disarmed it; let us seek that *peace*
which he has established, and press on with a *cheerful assur-*
ance, that the least of his followers shall share in the honours and
benefits of *his victory*.

SECT. CLXXIX.

Christ offers up a solemn prayer to the Father, that he himself might be glorified; and that those who were given him might be kept through his name. John XVII. 1—12.

JOHN XVII. 1.

JOHN XVII. 1.

THESE words spake Jesus; and lift up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is

OUR Lord *Jesus spake these words* which are SECT.
recorded in the preceding chapters, *and* CLXXIX.
then *lifted up his eyes to heaven*, and poured John
out a most affectionate and important prayer to XVII. 1.
his Father; an excellent model of his intercession in heaven, and a most comfortable and edifying representation of his temper both towards God and his people. And, that it might more effectually answer these great ends, he uttered it with an audible voice, *and said*, O my heavenly *Father, the* appointed and expected *hour*

SECT. CLXXIX. John XVII. 1.

is come in which I am to enter on my sufferings, and to complete the work for which I came into the world; and therefore I pray, that thou wouldest *glorify* me, *thy Son*, in those signal appearances for my honour and support in death, in my recovery from the grave, and mine ascension into heaven which thou hast promised to me, and which I know that thou wilt punctually fulfil;[a] *that thy Son also*, in the whole series of his conduct, both in this world, and in that to which he is now returning, *may* successfully *glorify thee*, and accomplish the purposes 2 of thy saving love; *According as thou hast*, by the engagements of thy covenant, *given him* that *power over all flesh*, that absolute dominion over all the human race, which he will ere long receive and exert; *that he may give eternal life to all that thou hast given him* by 3 that covenant to be redeemed and saved. *And this is* the sure way to that *eternal life*,[b] even *that they may know thee*, who art *the only* living and *true God*, in opposition to the idols they have ignorantly worshipped; *and* may know also and believe in *Jesus Christ*, *whom thou hast sent* into the world as the only Saviour: and to this therefore thou wilt bring them, and wilt make use of what I have already done, and shall yet farther do, as the means of effecting it.

come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

4 It is with unutterable pleasure that I now reflect upon it, O my Father and my God, that *I have* eminently *glorified thee on earth* during the whole of my abode here; that I have been faithful to the trust that was reposed in me, in all that I have said and done through the course of my ministry: and greatly do I rejoice, that *I have* now gone so far, as to be just upon

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I

[a] *Glorify thy Son.*] All the circumstances of glory attending the sufferings of Christ; as, the appearance of the angel to him in the garden, his striking down to the ground those that came to apprehend him, his curing the ear of Malchus, his good confession before Pilate, his extorting from that unjust judge a testimony of his innocence, the dream of Pilate's wife, the conversion of the penitent robber, the astonishing constellation of virtues and graces which shone so bright in Christ's dying behaviour, the supernatural darkness, and all the other prodigies that attended his death; as well as his resurrection, and ascension, and exaltation at God's right hand, and the mission of the Holy Spirit, and the consequent success of the gospel; are all to be looked upon as an answer to this prayer.

[b] *This is eternal life.*] Christ might insert this clause (though neither a petition, plea, nor any other part of prayer,) on purpose to remind his apostles of the importance of their office; as they were sent to spread that knowledge which he here calls eternal life, because the eternal happiness of men depends upon it.

SECT. CLXXIX.

John XVII. 5

have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me, with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

the point of having *finished*, by my sufferings and death, *the* important *work which thou gavest me to do. And now* therefore, O my heavenly *Father, do thou glorify me with thine own self, with the* original *glory which I had with thee before the world was* created,[c] and which for the salvation of thy people I have for a while laid aside, that I might clothe myself in this humble form.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

I have manifested thy name, and revealed the glory of thy power and grace, *to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world: they were* originally *thine*, the creatures of thine hand, and the happy objects of thy sovereign choice;[d] *and* in consequence of thy gracious purposes *thou gavest them to me*, that they might be instructed and sanctified, and formed for the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world: *and* such accordingly has been the influence of my doctrine on their hearts, that *they have* readily embraced it, and hitherto have resolutely *kept* and retained *thy word* and gospel. And, 6

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me, are of thee.

notwithstanding the mean appearance I have made to an eye of sense, that faith has owned me through this dark cloud: and even *now*, in this my humble state, *they have* perceived and *known that all things whatsoever* which I have said and done, and all the credentials which *thou hast* in fact *given me*, and which so many overlook, *are* indeed *of thee;* and that I am truly what I profess myself to be, a Divine Messenger to the children of men, and the Saviour that was promised to come into the world. This 7

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have

plainly appears to be their firm persuasion; *for the words which thou gavest to me, I have given to them*, I have revealed already much of my gospel to them, and begun to deposit it in their hands; *and* in the midst of great discouragement and opposition, giving attention to the words I 8

[c] *The glory which I had with thee before the world was.*] To suppose, with the Socinians, that this refers only to that glory which God intended for him in his decrees; or, with Mr. Fleming, that it refers only, or chiefly, to his being *clothed with the shekinah*, seems to sink and contract the sense far short of its genuine purpose. See Fleming's Christology, Vol. II. p. 247, and Whitby in loc.

[d] *They were* originally *thine.*] There can surely be no reason to imagine from the sacred story, that the apostles were chosen to their great office on account of any extraordinary degrees of piety and virtue, previous to their being called to follow Christ. So that I can see no natural sense of these words but what I have expressed in the paraphrase. Compare John xv. 16, page 450.

SECT. CLXXIX. John XVII. 8

spake, *they have received* [*them*] with faith and love, *and* made it manifest by their embracing and adhering to my doctrine, that they *have known in truth* the divinity of my mission, so as to be fully satisfied in their own minds *that I came out from thee* with a commission to reveal thy will, (compare John xvi. 27, 30;) *and* while I have been rejected by an ungrateful world, they have regarded me as the true Messiah, and have shewn they *have believed that thou didst* indeed *send me* on the great errand of their

received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 salvation. *I therefore pray for them*, who have attended me as my apostles, and for all those who are, or shall be, brought to the same faith and the same temper, that thou wouldest support them under every trial, and wouldest regard them in a peculiar manner as the objects of thy care; *I pray not* thus *for the* unbelieving *world, but for those whom thou hast* graciously *given me;* and I am confident that my prayer for them shall not be in vain; *for they are* not

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.

10 only mine, but *thine* too, chosen by thy grace, and devoted to thy service. *And* indeed *all mine* interests, and my people *are thine, and thine are* also *mine; and* while thy glory is advanced by their establishment, *I* likewise *am*, and finally shall be, *glorified in them:* so near and intimate is our relation to each other; so sincere and active thy paternal affection to me, O my heavenly Father, and my filial duty to thee.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.

11 *And now I am* to continue *no longer in the world: but these* my faithful servants *are* yet *in the world, and* some of them are to remain a considerable time in it, exposed to various hardships and dangers: whereas *I*, (delightful thought!) shall soon have done with this weary wilderness, and *am coming to thee*, who art the center of my soul, and the supreme object of my complacency and desire.[e] But while I am separated from these my servants, so dear to thee and to me, vouchsafe, *O holy Father*, to *keep*

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father,

[e] *And I am coming to thee.*] It is very plain, that this clause could not be intended as an additional argument to introduce the following petition; for Christ's coming to the Father was the great security of his people: but it seems rather to be a short reflection on that dear subject, so familiar to his mind, with which he for a moment refreshed himself in the course of this humble and pathetic address. This I have endeavoured to represent in the paraphrase.

SECT. CLXXIX.

John XVII. 11.

keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are.*

these whom thou hast thyself *given me,* and let them be preserved *through thy name;* let them be kept in safety by thy mighty power, and be established in the faith by a constant regard to thee, and a sense of thy presence impressed on their hearts; *that they* may still continue united to us, and to each other, in cordial affection, and *may be one, even as we* [*are*] one.

12 While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

12 Do not, O gracious Father, forget these my friends, in whose cause I have so affectionately engaged; for thou art witness, that *while I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name,* and through the influences of thy grace; [*yea,*] *I guarded them whom thou gavest me* with a most constant care, *and none of them is lost, unless it be* counted as a kind of exception, that *the son of perdition* perishes by his iniquity;[f] that wretched creature, who in a lower sense was indeed given to me, but never, like the rest, was taken under my special care; but is left to fall into deserved ruin,[g] *that the scripture might*

[f] *Unless it be the son of perdition.*] I am surprised that so many very learned divines, and amongst the rest, even Bishop Burnet himself, (whom I cannot mention but with the greatest honour,) should so roundly infer from these words, that the giving to Christ, in the preceding clauses, cannot imply an election to glory, since it is here intimated, that Judas, who perished, was given as well as the rest. (See Burnet on the Articles, p. 160.) The objection to a mere English reader might appear unanswerable; but those so conversant in the original might easily have observed, that if this text will prove that Judas was in the number of those given to Christ, in the same manner Luke iv. 26, 27. will prove, directly contrary to plain fact and the whole tenor of the argument, that the woman of Sarepta was a widow in Israel, and Naaman the Syrian a leper in Israel too; John iii. 13, that Christ ascended into heaven before he began his ministry; Rev. ix. 4. that the men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads, were either grass or trees; and Rev. xxi. 27, that there are some of the most abominable of mankind whose names are written in the book of life. See also Mat. v. 13; xii. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 13. In all which places, as well as the preceding, it is plain that εἰ μη is not used strictly as an exceptive particle; and that if it has any thing like that force, it is only to intimate that what it introduces may, in a less proper sense, be reduced to the number of things mentioned before it. And this I take to be its precise sense in this text; for which reason I render it [*unless it be*] though in some of the former instances it has not so much signification as that; but is used with as great a liberty, as [*except*] by Milton, when he says of Satan,

> ——— God and his Son *except,*
> Created thing nought valued he nor shunn'd.

Thus likewise ἐαν μη is used, Gal. ii. 16; John v. 19; xv. 4.——The words before us might indeed refer to the apostles, (compare John xviii. 8, 9; sect. clxxxiii.) but I do not see any necessity of confining them to Christ's care for their preservation, for the reason given above.

[g] Is left to fall into deserved ruin.] The *son of perdition* signifies one who *deservedly perishes: as a son of death* (2 Sam. xii. 5.) *children of hell,* (Mat. xxiii. 15.) and *children of wrath,* (Eph. ii. 3.) signify persons *justly obnoxious to death, hell,* and *wrath.*

be fulfilled, which foretold it as the dreadful consequence of his treachery. (See Psal. cix. 8, & seq. compared with Acts i. 20.)

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH pleasure let us behold our gracious *Redeemer* in this
Ver. 1. posture of humble adoration; *lifting up his eyes* to God with solemn devotion, and pouring out his pious and benevolent Spirit in those Divine breathings which are here recorded. From his example, let us learn to *pray;* and from his intercession, to *hope*. We know *that the Father heareth him always*, (John xi. 42.) and singularly did he manifest that he heard him now, by all that bright assemblage of *glories* which shone around him in the concluding scenes of his abode on earth, and in those that attended his removal from it: and in all this too did the blessed *Jesus* manifest his zeal for the *glory of the Father*. May we emulate that holy temper! and when we *pray* even for *our own* consummate *happiness* in the heavenly world, may we consider it as ultimately centering in the honour and service of God.

2 Well may we be encouraged to hope for that *happiness*, since *Christ* has an universal *power over all flesh*, and over *spirits* superior to those that dwell in flesh; with which he is invested on purpose that he may accomplish the *salvation of those whom the*
3 *Father has given him*, even of every true believer. We see the certain *way to this life*, even the *knowledge of God in Christ:* let us bless God, that we enjoy so many opportunities of obtaining it; and earnestly pray that *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, would by his Divine rays *shine* forth on our benighted souls; and so animate us in his service, from the noblest principles of gratitude and love, that we may be able to say, even in our dying moments, with somewhat of the same
4 Spirit which *our Lord* expressed, *Father*, we *have glorified thee on earth, and finished the work which thou gavest us to do;*
11 and therefore, being *no more in the world*, we *come unto thee*. Then may we hope, in our humble degree, to partake of that *glory* to which he is returned, and to *sit down with him on his* victorious *throne*.

7, 8 In the mean time, may our *faith* see, and our *zeal* confess, *Christ!* May we *acknowledge* his *Divine authority*, as having *come out from the Father!* May we be *united* in love to him, and to each other; and be *kept* by that *Divine word* which is
12 the security of his people, that *none of them* shall be *lost!* Let *the son of perdition*, who perished even from among the *apostles*, teach us an humble jealousy over our own hearts, whatever external privileges we enjoy; and engage us to maintain a continual regard to *him who is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy!* (Jude ver. 24.)

SECT. CLXXX.

Our Lord concludes his prayer, recommending his apostles, and succeeding Christians in every future age, to the favourable regards of his Father, and praying for their union on earth and glory in heaven. John XVII. 13, *to the end.*

JOHN XVII. 13.

JOHN XVII. 13.

AND now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

OUR Lord proceeded in that excellent address to God, which he had begun in the former section, in such words as these: *And now*, O my heavenly Father, *I come unto thee* with unutterable pleasure; *and these* [*words*] of this prayer *I speak* thus openly in the hearing of my disciples, while as yet I am with them *in the world, that they* who now hear me, and those too for whose benefit it may be afterwards recorded, *may have my joy*, even that holy consolation of which I am the author and support, abundantly *fulfilled in them*. And it indeed becomes me to be thus solicitous for their comfort and happiness: for *I have given them thy word*, which they have faithfully received: *and* in consequence of this, though they are indeed the greatest friends and benefactors of mankind, yet *the world has* ungratefully *hated them*, and will be sure to persecute them with the utmost violence, *because they are not of* the same spirit with *the world, even as I* myself, in whose cause they are engaged, *am not of the world*, so as to conform to it in my temper and conduct. Since therefore for my sake they stand thus exposed to hatred, injury, and oppression, I most affectionately bear them on my heart before thee, O my heavenly Father! yet *I do not pray that thou shouldst take them* immediately *out of the world*, bad as it is; since I know the purposes of thy glory, and their own improvement and usefulness, will require their longer continuance in it; *but* I pray *that thou wouldst preserve them from* being either corrupted or overwhelmed by *the evil* which perpetually surrounds them, and that the subtlety and malice of the evil one may never overpower them. For I well know, that they will meet with many trials which will bear hard upon them; because (as I have said) *they are not* of a temper suited to the common sen-

SECT. CLXXX. John XVII. 13

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.

16 They are not

SECT. CLXXX.

John XVII.

timents and practice *of the world, even as I,* their Lord and Master, *am not of the world.*

To arm them therefore against so formidable an attack, and to maintain and cultivate this holy temper in them, I would entreat thee to complete the work that is so happily begun, and to *sanctify them* more and more *through thy truth*;[a] and as *thy word*, and gospel which they are to preach *is* the great system of sanctifying *truth*, whereby real holiness is to be for ever promoted, may these thy servants feel more and more of its vital energy on their own souls, to qualify them for the office of dispensing it to others. For *as thou hast sent me into the world* to be the messenger of this grace, *I also have sent them into the world* on the same errand, to publish and proclaim what they have learnt of me. *And* it is in some measure *for their sakes*, as well as for the salvation of all my people, that *I* now *sanctify myself*, or set myself apart as an offering holy to thee; *that they also*, taught by my example, and animated by my dying love, *may be* truly *sanctified through the truth*, and completely fitted for their important office.

And in presenting these petitions for them, I am not chiefly influenced by the personal attachment of private friendship, but I consider them under their public character; *nor do I pray for these* my apostles *alone*, or offer myself merely for them; *but for them also who shall* hereafter *believe on me through their word*, whether it be preached or written; even for those who are yet unborn, and on whom the ends of the world shall come: *That*, being animated by the same spirit, and inspired with the same love, *they all may be* truly and intimately *one, as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may* in friendship and happiness *be one in us,*

of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

21 That they all may be one, as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one

[a] *Sanctify them through thy truth.*] I see no reason to conclude, with Mr. Mede, that εν τη αληθειᾳ must be put for εις την αληθειαν, that is, *for the service of the gospel.* That was indeed the remote end which our Lord had in view; but the more immediate was, that their own souls might be transformed and purified by it.—To *sanctify*, signifies in general, *to set apart* to any appropriate use: and is used with peculiar propriety with reference to *sacrifice*: which seems to be the sense in which our Lord applies it to himself in ver. 19. Compare Exod. xiii. 2; xxix. 1; and Lev. xxii. 2.

in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

united to us and to each other, and deriving from us the richest supplies of Divine consolation; *that* so *the world*, seeing their benevolence, and charity, and holy joy, *may believe that thou hast sent me*, and that a religion productive of such amiable fruits is indeed of Divine original.[b] SECT. CLXXX. John XVII. 21

22 And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one:

And the glory which, by the covenant of redemption, *thou gavest* unto *me*, *I have*, as authorized by thee, *given* unto *them*, by my faithful and invariable promise, as the great encouragement of their faith and hope;[c] *that they may* all *be one, even as we are one*, and, in consequence of such a blessed union, may dwell together with us, and with each other, in eternal felicity: 22

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Thus therefore may it ever be, *I* dwelling *in them, and thou in me; that they*, who now enjoy the first beginnings of this happy state, *may* at length *be made* completely *perfect in one*, and be united in the most cordial love, without any jarring affection, or the least mixture of sorrow and complaint; that so the clearest demonstration may be given of the efficacy of thy grace, *and that the world* by this means *may know that thou hast sent me*, while they perceive them under my forming care to become visibly and justly the favourites of heaven; *and* it may thus be manifest to all that thou *hast loved them, as thou hast loved me*, and has extended this mercy to them for my sake. 23

24 Father, I will

But no improvements, either in holiness or comfort, in this world, can completely answer the purposes of my love, and the promises of my grace to them; and therefore, O my *Father*, permit me to say, that *I will*, that is, I importunately ask it, and, in consequence of the mutual transactions between us, I am bold to claim it as matter of 24

[b] *That the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*] This plainly intimates, that dissensions among Christians would not only be uncomfortable to themselves, but would be a means of bringing the truth and excellence of the Christian religion into question: and he must be a stranger to what hath passed, and is daily passing, in the world, who does not see what fatal advantage they have given to infidels to misrepresent it as a calamity, rather than to regard it as a blessing to mankind. May we be so wise as to take the warning, before we are quite destroyed one of another! (Gal. v. 15.)

[c] *The glory which thou gavest me I have given them, &c.*] As it was plainly in his Father's name, and by the authority of his commission, that Christ had given them this promise, which with a lively faith they had affectionately embraced; so this was one of the strongest arguments that could be urged for the complete accomplishment of it.

SECT. CLXXX. John XVII. 24

right *that they also whom thou hast* graciously *given me*, even all thy chosen and sanctified people, *may* at length *be with me where I am*, in that heavenly world to which I am now removing; *that they may* there *behold* and contemplate, with everlasting delightful admiration, *my glory which thou hast* by thy sure appointment *given me*,[d] and art just ready to bestow; *for thou hast loved me before the foundation of the world*, and didst then decree for me that mediatorial kingdom with which thou art now about to invest me.

that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

25 And herein thou wilt not only be merciful, but faithful and just too, as it is congruous to those essential perfections of thy nature, *O* most *righteous Father*, thus to distinguish me and my followers with a peculiar glory: for *though the world has not known* or acknowledged *thee*,[e] yet *I have known thee*, and have accordingly directed the whole of my ministrations to thy glory; *and these* my servants too *have known that thou hast sent me*, and will courageously assert it, even at the expence of their very lives.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

26 *And I have declared thy name to them, and will*, as I have opportunity, farther go on to *declare* [*it*,] both by my word, and by my spirit; *that* their graces and services may be more eminent; that even *the love with which thou hast loved me may be* dwelling *in them; and* that *I* also may take up my constant residence *in them* by my spiritual presence, when my bodily presence is removed, as it will quickly be.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 13. WE have indeed perpetual reason of thankfulness, that our gracious Redeemer *spake these words in the world*, and recalled them thus exactly to the memory of his *beloved disciples* so many years after, that we in the most distant ages of his church might, by

[d] *My glory which thou hast given me.*] This may express the lustre and beauty of Christ's personal appearance, the adoration paid him by the inhabitants of the upper world, and the administration of the affairs of that providential kingdom, which it is his high office to preside over.

[e] *Though the world has not known thee.*] That καὶ here signifies *though*, the connection plainly demonstrates; and Elsner produces many instances of it: (Observ. Vol. I. p. 344.) To which the following instances from the sacred writers may be added, among many others. Luke xviii. 7; John xiv. 30; Acts vii. 5; and Heb. iii. 9.

reviewing them, have *his joy fulfilled in us.* Let us with plea- SECT.
sure recollect that those *petitions* which *Christ* offered for his CLXXX.
apostles, were expressly declared *not* to be intended *for them* Ver. 20.
alone; but so far as circumstances should agree, *for all that should believe on him through their word*, and therefore *for us*, if we are real, and not merely nominal *believers.* For us doth he still *pray, not that God would* immediately *take us out of the world*, though 15
for his sake we may be continually *hated* and injured in it, *but* 16
that he would *keep us from the evil* to which we are here exposed. *For our sakes* did he also *sanctify himself* as a propitiation 19
for our sins, *that we might also be sanctified through the truth;* for he *gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* (Tit. ii. 14.)

May these wise and gracious purposes of his love be fulfilled in us! *May* we *be one* with each other, and with him! May that 21
piety and charity appear in the whole series of our temper and behaviour, which may evidently shew the force of our religion, and reflect a conspicuous honour upon the great Founder of it! And may all concur to train us up for that complete felicity above, in which all the purposes of his love centre! It is the declared *will* of *Christ*, and let us never forget it, *that* his people should *be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory* 24
which the Father has given him. And there is apparent congruity, as well as mercy, in the appointment: that *where he is, there also should his servants* and members *be.* The blessed *angels* do undoubtedly *behold the glory of Christ* with perpetual congratulation and delight; but how much more reason shall *we* have to rejoice and triumph in it, when we consider it as *the glory* of one in our own nature, the *glory* of our Redeemer and our Friend, and the pledge and security of our own everlasting happiness! Let us often be lifting up the eyes of our faith towards it, and let us breathe after heaven in this view! in the mean time, with all due zeal, and love, and duty, *acknowledging* 25
the Father and the Son, that the *joys of heaven* may be anticipated in our souls, while *the love of God is shed abroad* there *by his Spirit, which is given unto us:* even something of that *love* 26
wherewith he has loved Jesus our incarnate Head.

SECT. CLXXXI.

Jesus retires from the guest-chamber to the garden of Gethsemane, and in his way thither renews the caution which he had given to Peter and the rest of the apostles. Mat. XXVI. 31—35. Mark XIV. 27—31. Luke XXII. 39. John XVIII. 1.

JOHN XVIII. 1.

[AND] when Jesus had spoken these

JOHN XVIII. 1.

AND when Jesus had spoken these words that are mentioned above, and had concluded

SECT. CLXXXI.

John XVIII. 1

his discourse with this excellent prayer to his heavenly Father, *he came out* from the guest-chamber, where he had celebrated the passover, *and, according to* his usual *custom* every night, *went forth with his disciples* out of the city; and crossing *over the brook Kedron*, which lay on the east side of Jerusalem, he came *to* the foot of *the mount of Olives, where there was a garden* belonging to one of his friends, *into which* he had often been used to retire; and though he knew his enemies would come this very night to seize him there, yet *he entered* into it,[a] *and his disciples also followed him*.

words, he [came out, and] went forth, as he was wont,] with his disciples, over the brook Cedron, [to the mount of Olives,] where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples [also followed him.] [Luke xxii. 39.]

Mat. xxvi. 31

Then, as they were on the way thither, *Jesus says to them*, Notwithstanding all the faith you have professed in me, and all the affection which I know you bear me, yet not only one or another, but *all* of *you shall be offended because of me this* very *night*; and the hour is just at hand, when you will be so terrified by the distress befalling me in your presence, that it shall prove the sad occasion of your falling into sin, by your forsaking me, your Master and Friend, and leaving me in the hands of the enemy: *for it is written*, (Zech. xiii. 7.) "*I will smite the Shep-herd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scat-tered*:" I am the Shepherd, and you the timorous sheep, to be dispersed by the assault made on your Keeper. *But*, as it is afterwards added there by way of encouragement, "I will "turn my hand upon the little ones," to reduce and recover them from this dissipated state; so likewise I assure you for your comfort, that *after I am risen* from the dead, as I shall soon be, *I will go before you into Galilee*, and there give, not only you, my apostles, but all my disciples, the amplest demonstration both of my resurrection and my love; whereby your hearts shall be established in the firmest adherence to

MAT. XXVI. 31. Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. [Mark xiv. 27.]

32 But after [that] I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. [Mark xiv. 28.]

[a] *A garden, into which he entered.*] Christ probably retired into such a private place, not only for the advantage of secret devotion, which perhaps he might not so well have enjoyed in the city at so public a time, but also that the people might not be alarmed at his being apprehended, nor, in the first sallies of their zeal and rage, attempt to rescue him in a tumultuous manner.—Kedron was, as its name signifies, *a dark shady vale* between Jerusalem and the mount of Olives, through which a little brook ran, which took its name from the place. (Compare 2 Sam. xv. 23.)

me: and upon this he named the particular place where he would meet them.[b] SECT. CLXXXI

33 [But] Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, [yet] will I never be offended. [Mark XIV. 29.]

But Peter was so grieved to hear him say that they should all be offended, and be scattered from him, that, with a confident assurance of his own stedfastness, he *answered and said to him*, My dearest Lord, there is no trial can surmount the love I bear thee! and whatsoever danger or distress may be at hand, I am absolutely resolved and determined upon it, that *though* every one besides, and even *all* the rest of these my brethren, *should be offended because of* the calamities that are coming on *thee*, and upon this account should be induced to forsake thee, *yet will I never be offended*, but will follow thee even to the last. Mat. XXVI. 33

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this [day, *even* in this] night, before the cock crow [twice,] thou shalt deny me thrice. [Mark xiv. 30.]

Jesus said to him, Peter, this confidence does not at all become thee, especially after the warning I gave thee at supper;[c] but I repeat it again, and *verily I say unto thee, That to-day*, yea, [*even*] *this* very *night* which is now begun, *before the cock crow twice, thou shalt* repeatedly *deny me* in the most shameful manner; for after thou hast heard it once, thou shalt not be admonished; but before it crow a second time, thou shalt repeat the fault; nay, thou shalt do it *thrice*, and every time with new aggravations. 34

35 [But] Peter [spake the more vehemently, *and*] said

But Peter upon this, instead of being awakened to a humble sense of his own weakness, *spake the more eagerly*, [*and*,] with a mixture of grief and indignation at the thought, *said to him*, Lord, no danger whatsoever can induce me to be guilty of such baseness; for such is the sin- 35

[b] He named the particular place where he would meet them.] An appointment to meet in so large a region as Galilee would without this have been of very little use; and Mat. xxviii. 16, (§ ccii.) expressly declares such an appointment. We do not know the exact place, but we there learn from Matthew, it was a certain mountain: probably it might be near the sea of Tiberius; not only because we find Christ on the borders of that sea after his resurrection, (John xxii. 1. § cc.) but also because, as he had resided there longer than any where else, he had, no doubt, the greatest number of his disciples thereabouts; and it lay pretty near the centre of his chief circuits, and therefore must be most convenient, especially for those beyond Jordan, where many had of late believed in him. See John x. 40—42, § cxxxiv.

[c] After the warning I gave thee at supper.] See Luke xxii. 34, and John xiii. 38, p. 425, 426. I persuade myself that an attentive comparison of those texts with these before us in Matthew and Mark, will convince the reader that these admonitions were first given at the table, and now repeated as they went out: nor can I find any way of forming them all harmoniously into one compound text, without such a supposition.

SECT. CLXXXI. Mat. XXVI. 35

cerity and strength of my affection to thee, that *though I should die with thee* on the place, *yet I will not deny thee in any manner* or degree,[d] but would a thousand times rather fall by thy side in a brave and resolute defence, than so much as seem to neglect thee, or in any respect to fail of the strictest and most affectionate fidelity. *Likewise also said all the disciples*, with equal sincerity of present intention, though neither he nor they had courage enough to abide by that resolution. Jesus therefore insisted no farther on the matter, but left them to be taught by the event.

unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee [in any wise.] Likewise also said all the disciples. [Mark xiv. 31.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xxvi. 31, 32

So feeble is the heart of man, and yet so ready to trust to its own strength! So gracious is the *Lord Jesus Christ*, that great *Shepherd and Bishop of souls*, who gave himself to be *smitten for his flock* when they had forsaken him; and then returning, sought them out again, and fed them in richer pastures than before!

How reasonable is it, that our hearts should be fixed in the most inflexible resolution for his service! How fit that we should every one of us say, with the utmost determination of soul, 35 *Lord, though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee!* For how could death wear a more graceful, or a more pleasing form, than when it met us close by *our Saviour's* side, and came as the seal of our fidelity to him?

Surely this is the language of many of our hearts before him, especially when warmed and animated by a sense of his dying love to us. Yet *let us not be high-minded;* for *Peter*, after this decla- 34, 35 ration, *denied his Master; and the same night* in which they had protested they would never leave him, *all the disciples forsook him and fled*, (Mat. xxvi. 56.) Nor on the other hand, let the view of that frailty discourage, though it ought to caution us; for the time came when each of them behaved as they here spoke; and they who in his very presence acted so weak a part, through

[d] *Spake the more eagerly,—I will not deny thee in any manner* or degree.] Εκπερισσως ελεγε μαλλον,—ου μη σε απαρνησομαι. I think the energy of these original expressions cannot be reached in a version: I have therefore attempted it in the paraphrase: and must observe that, if Mark's gospel was reviewed by Peter, as the ancients say, (and particularly Clemens Alexandrinus, as quoted by Eusebius Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. cap. 15, on which see Dr. Lardner's Credibility, part ii. Vol. II. chap. 22, § 5.) it is peculiarly worth our notice that the aggravations attending Peter's denial of our Lord should be more strongly represented by Mark than by any other evangelist; which, in that case, probably was done by his own particular direction, and may be regarded as a genuine proof of his deep humiliation and penitence. Compare Mark xiv. 66—72, with Mat. xxvi. 69—75; Luke xxii. 54—62; and John xviii. 25—27, § clxxiv.

the influences of his strengthening spirit, *resisted unto blood*, and *loved not their lives unto the death, for the testimony of Jesus.* (Rev. xii. 11.)

SECT. CLXXXII.

Jesus enters the garden of Gethsemane, and falls into his agony there; during which his disciples fall asleep, for which he gently reproves them, and warns them of the enemies' approach. Mat. XXVI. 36—46. Mark XIV. 32—42. Luke XXII. 40—46.

MAT. XXVI. 36.

Mat. XXVI. 36. THEN cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane; and [Luke, when he was at the place, he] saith unto [his] disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. [Mark xiv. 32. Luke xxii. 40.—]

THEN, after this discourse with his disciples, *Jesus comes with them to the place* we mentioned above, which was *called Gethsemane*, as being a very pleasant and fertile garden,[a] *and when he was* arrived just *at* the entrance into *the place* whither he was used to retire, *he says to* eight of *his disciples*, *Sit ye* down *here* a while, and observe what passes abroad, *while I go and pray* in *yonder* retirement. SECT. CLXXXII. Mat. XXVI. 36

37 And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee [James and John,] and began to be sorrowful [sore amazed,] and very heavy. [Mark xiv. 33.]

And, as this was a very extraordinary passage of his life, *he took* along *with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John*, who had been witnesses of his transfiguration, and were now chosen by him to be witnesses of his agony. *And* as he went on with them towards a more retired part of the garden, *he began to be in* a very *great* and visible *dejection, amazement, and anguish of mind*,[b] on account of some painful 37

[a] *Called Gethsemane*, as being a very pleasant and fertile garden.] It is well known that גיא שמנים signifies *the valley of Fatness*. The garden probably had its name from its soil and situation, and lay in some little valley between two of those many hills, the range of which constitutes the mount of Olives, and it is with some peculiar reference to this situation, that some have rendered it *torcular olei*, or *a fat of oil*.

[b] *He began to be in great dejection, amazement, and anguish of mind*.] The words which our translators use here, are very flat, and fall vastly short of the emphasis of the terms in which the evangelists describe this awful scene: for λυπεισθαι signifies *to be penetrated with* the most lively and piercing *sorrow*; and αδημονειν to be quite *depressed* and almost overwhelmed with the load: Mark expresses it, if possible, in a more forcible and stronger manner; for εκθαμβεισθαι imports the most shocking mixture of *terror* and *amazement*; and περιλυπος, in the next verse, intimates that he was *surrounded with sorrow* on every side, so that it broke in upon him with such violence that, humanly speaking, there was no way of escape. I have endeavoured, as well as I could, to express each of these ideas in the paraphrase.—Dr. More truly observes, that Christ's continued resolution, in the midst of these agonies and supernatural horrors.

SECT. CLXXXII.

and dreadful sensations which were then impressed upon his soul by the immediate hand of God.

Mat. XXVI. 38

Then, turning to his three disciples, *he says to them*, My friends, you never saw me in so great distress as now; for *my soul is surrounded* on all sides *with* an extremity of anguish and *sorrow*, which tortures me *even* almost *unto death*; and I know that the infirmity of human nature must quickly sink under it, without some extraordinary relief from God; to him therefore I will apply with the greatest earnestness: and do you in the mean time *continue here, and watch with me*,[c] considering how liable we are to be surprised; [*and*] let me remind you also to *pray* for yourselves, *that you may not enter into* that dangerous *temptation* of which I have just been giving you notice, or may be kept from falling by it. See Mat. xxvi. 31. sect. clxxxi.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me; [Luke, *and* pray, that ye enter not into temptation.] [Mark xiv. 34. Luke xxii. 40.]

Mark xiv. 35

And going on a little way from thence into a more retired part of the garden, *when he was* now *withdrawn about a stone's throw from* the place where he left *them*, *he* first humbly *knelt down*, *and* then, as the ardour of his devotion increased, he *prostrated himself on his face to the ground, and prayed*, *That if it were possible, that* dreadful *season* of sorrow, with which he was then almost overwhelmed, *might* be shortened

36 and *pass from him*. *And he said*, *Abba*, *Father*, I know that *all things* proper to be done *are possible to thee*; and, *O my Father*, *if it be* so far *possible*, as to consist with what thy wisdom has appointed for the advancement of thy glory,

MARK XIV. 35. And he went forward a little, [Luke, and was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down,] and fell [on his face] on the ground, and prayed, That if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. [Mat. xxvi. 39.—Luke xxii. 41.]

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; [O my Father, if it be possible,]

was the most heroic that can be imagined; and far superior to valour in single combat, or in battle; where, in one case, the spirit is raised by natural indignation; and in the other, by the pomp of war, the sound of martial music, the example of fellow-soldiers, &c. See More's Theolog. Works, p. 38.—Dr. Whitby will not allow that these agonies arose from the immediate hand of God upon him; which he thinks not to be the case, even of the damned in hell. But it seems impossible to prove that it is not. He rather thinks it might arise from a deep apprehension of the malignity of sin, and the misery brought upon the world by it. But considering how much the mind of Christ was wounded and broken with what he now endured, so as to give some greater external signs of distress than in any other circumstances of his sufferings, there is reason to conclude there was something extraordinary in the degree of the impression: and it surely comes much to the same, whether we say that God, by his own immediate agency, impressed some uncommon horrors on his mind, or that the strength of his spirits, and perhaps the tone of his nerves, were so impaired, that the view he had of these things should affect him to a degree of exquisite and uncommon sensibility.

[c] *Watch with me.*] Had they done this carefully, they would soon have found a rich equivalent for their watchful care, in the eminent improvement of their graces by this wonderful and edifying sight.

take away this cup, [*and* let *it* pass] from me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt. [Mat. xxvi.—39.]

and the salvation of thy people, I earnestly beseech thee, that thou immediately wouldest *take away this cup* of bitterness and terror;[d] [*yea,*] *let* [*it*] now *pass from me*, and let comfort and peace return to my soul: *nevertheless*, if thou seest it necessary to continue it, or to add yet more grievous ingredients to it, I am here ready to receive it in submission to thy will, and resolutely say upon the whole, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt;* for though nature cannot but shrink back from these sufferings, it is the determinate purpose of my soul to bear whatsoever thine infinite wisdom shall see fit to appoint.

SECT. CLXXXII

Mark XIV. 36.

37 And he cometh [unto the disciples], and findeth them sleeping; and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? [What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Mat. xxvi. 40.]

And upon this, rising up from the ground on which he had lain prostrate, *he comes* again *to the* three *disciples, and*, notwithstanding the distress that he was in, and the command that he had given to them to watch, he *finds them* all *asleep; and he* particularly *says to Peter* (who had but lately made such solemn protestations of his peculiar zeal and fidelity), What, *Simon dost thou sleep* at such a time as this? and after thou hadst just declared thy resolution to die with me, *couldest thou* so soon forget thy promise to stand by me, and *not* so much as *watch* or keep awake but for *one hour*, when I was in such an agony? And you that were so ready to join with him in the same profession, could neither of you be mindful of me: and in this time of my extreme distress *were ye* all *so unable* to perform your resolution as not *to watch one* single *hour with me?* I must again exhort you to *watch and pray* with the greatest earnestness, *that ye may not enter into* and fall by that dangerous *temptation* which is now approaching:[e]

37

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation: the

38

[d] *Take away this cup.*] Nothing is more common, than to express a portion of comfort or distress by a cup, alluding to the custom of the father of a family, or master of a feast, to send to his children or guests a cup of such liquor as he designed for them. See note [d] on Mat. xx. 22. p. 259; and with the texts which are referred to at the end of that note, compare Psal. xvi. 5; xxiii. 5; lxxv. 8; Jer. xvi. 7; xlix. 12; Lam. iv. 21; Ezek. xxiii. 32, 33; Hab ii. 16; and Rev. xiv. 10; xvi. 19. In some of which texts there may, perhaps, be a reference to the way of executing some criminals by sending them a cup of poison; which is well known to have been an eastern, though not (so far as I can learn) a Jewish custom.

[e] *Watch and pray*, &c.] How poorly is this exhortation answered by those vigils and nocturnal offices of the Romish church, which are said to have had their original from hence! Rhemish. Testam. p. 79.—I think it more proper, on a review, to render ἵνα μη εισελθητε in the preceding verse, with Dr. Hammond, *Were ye so unable*, &c. than to retain

SECT. CLXXXII

Mark XIV. 38.

the spirit indeed is forward, and ready to express the dutiful regard that you have for me, and I know your resolutions of adhering to me are very sincere; *but* yet, as your own present experience may convince you, *the flesh is weak*;[f] and as you have been so far prevailed upon by its infirmities, as to fall asleep at this very unseasonable time, so if you are not more upon your guard, and more importunate in seeking for assistance from above, it will soon gain a much greater victory over you.

spirit truly is [willing], but the flesh is weak. [Mat. xxvi. 41.]

39 *And* when he had thus gently admonished them, *he went away again the second time*, to a little distance from them, *and prayed* as he had done before, *speaking* much *the same words*, or expressing himself to the like effect, with the same ardour and submission, *saying*, *O my Father*, *if* it be necessary, in the pursuance of the great end for which I came into the world, that I should endure these grievous sufferings, and *this cup cannot pass from me without my drinking it*, and wringing out, as it were, the very dregs of it, I will still humbly acquiesce, and say, *Thy will be done*, how painful soever it may be to flesh and blood.

39 And again he went away [the second time], and prayed, and spake the same words, [saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.] [Mat. xxvi. 42.]

40 *And returning back* to his three disciples, *he found them asleep again*; *for* the fatigue and trouble they had lately undergone, had exhausted their spirits, and *their eyes were* quite *weighed down* with weariness and sorrow: and he admonished them again as before: *and* they were so thoroughly confounded, that *they knew not what to answer him*; and yet immediately after, they were so weak and senseless as to relapse into the same fault again.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy); neither wist they what to answer him. [Mat. xxvi. 43.]

Mat. XXVI. 44.

And, having roused them for the present from their sleep, *he left them*; *and went away again*, *and prayed the third time*, *speaking* much

MAT. XXVI. 44. And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time saying the same words;

our version of *How what*, which seems a less common and less forcible sense.

[f] *The spirit indeed is forward* and ready, *but the flesh is weak.*] So gentle a rebuke, and so kind an apology (as Archbishop Tillotson very justly and beautifully observes), were the more remarkable, as our Lord's mind was now discomposed with sorrow, so that he must have the deeper and tenderer sense of the unkindness of his friends. (See Tillots. Works, Vol. II. p. 435.)—How apt are we to think affliction an excuse for peevishness! But how unlike are we to Christ in that thought, and how unkind to ourselves, as well as our friends, to whom, in such circumstances, with our best temper, we must be more troublesome than we could wish!

Luke XXII. 42. Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it

the same words as before, or offering petitions to the same effect:[g] *Saying, Father, if thou pleasest to take away this cup from me*, and to excuse me from the continuance of this bitter anguish and distress,[h] it is what would greatly rejoice me, and with due submission I would humbly ask it; *nevertheless*, as I said before, *not my will but thine be done.* *And*, in this last address, his combat was so violent and severe, that he was almost overwhelmed; and therefore, for his assistance against the powers of darkness, which united their force against him in the most terrible manner, *there appeared to him an angel from heaven*, standing near him in a visible form, *strengthening him* by that sensible token of the Father's protection and favour, and suggesting such holy consolations as were most proper to animate his soul in such a struggle.[i] Yet with all these assurances that he was still the charge of heaven, and quickly should be made victorious over all, his terror and distress continued; *and being in an* unspeakable *agony, he prayed* yet *more intensely* than before, insomuch that, though he was now in the open air, *and*, in the cool of the night, *his sweat* ran off with uncommon violence; yea, so extraordinary was the commotion of animal nature, that blood was also forced in an amaz-

[g] *Speaking* much *the same words.*] It is plain, by comparing ver. 39 and 42, that the words were not entirely the same; and it is certain that λογος often signifies *matter*; so that no more appears to be intended than that he prayed to the same purpose as before.

[h] *If thou pleasest to take away this cup from me.*] The observing reader will easily perceive by the paraphrase, that I do not suppose our Lord here prayed to be excused entirely from sufferings and death. Such a petition appears to me so inconsistent with that steady constancy he always shewed, and with that lively turn, (John xii. 27, 28, p. 296.) in which he seems to disown such a prayer, that I think even Hooker's solution, though the best I have met with, is not satisfactory. (Hooker's Eccles. Polity, lib. v. § 48.) It appears to me much safer to expound it, as Sir Matthew Hale does (in his Contemplation, Vol. I. p. 59,) as relating to the terror and severity of the combat in which he was now actually engaged. (See Limborch's Theol. lib. iii. cap. 13, § 17.) This throws great light on Heb. v. 7, *He was heard in that he feared.*—Since the former editions I have had the pleasure to find this interpretation beautifully illustrated and judiciously confirmed by the learned Dr. Thomas Jackson, in his Works. Vol. II. p. 813. 817. 947.

[i] *An angel from heaven strengthening him.*] Some of the ancient Christians thought it so dishonourable to Christ, that he should receive such assistance from an angel, that they omitted this verse in their copies; as Jerom and Hilary inform us. It is indeed wanting in some manuscripts: but far the greatest number of copies have it; and could Hilary have proved it a spurious addition, he would, no doubt, have done it, since it so directly contradicts the wild notion he seems to maintain, that Christ was incapable of any painful sensations. (See Dr. Mill, in loc.)

SECT. CLXXXII. ing manner through the pores, together with the sweat; which *was as it were great drops of blood falling down* from his face, and dropping in clots *on the ground*, as he bowed himself to the earth.[k]

were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Luke XXII. 44

45 *And rising up from prayer*, after this dreadful conflict, *he came* back *to his disciples the third time, and*, notwithstanding the repeated admonitions he had given them, he again, *found them sleeping; for* their senses were quite stupified, and their spirits exhausted with *sorrow*.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples [Mark, the third time,] he found them sleeping for sorrow, [Mat. xxvi. 43—Mark xiv. 41—]

46 *And he said to them, Why do you* still go on to *sleep* at such a season as this? This drowsy disposition makes it necessary to renew my exhortation, and to call upon you yet once more to *arise and pray that you may not enter into* a circumstance of very dangerous *temptation*. But as all this did not sufficiently rouse them,

46 And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

Mat. XXVI. 45. *and* he knew those that came to apprehend him were just now entering the garden, *he* altered his voice, and *said to them* in an ironical manner, You may *now sleep on* if you can, *and take your rest* as long as you please. I have been calling you to watch; but *it is* now *enough*; for this season of watching is over, and I have no farther need to press you to it: you will now be roused by another kind of alarm than what my words have given; for *behold, the* long expected *hour is* at length *come, and the Son of man is* even now *betrayed into the hands of* the most inhuman *sinners*: *Arise*, therefore, and *let us go* along with them whithersoever they shall lead us: for *behold he that betrayeth me is*

MAT. XXVI. 45. And he saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest; [It is enough;] behold, the hour is [come,] and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. [Mark xiv.—41.]

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is

[k] *His sweat was as it were great drops of blood*, &c.] Many expositors have thought, as Mr. Le Clerc did, that the expression [ὡσει θρομβοι αιματος] only implies, that his *drops of sweat were large and clammy like clots of gore*: but Dr. Whitby observes, that Aristotle and Diodorus Siculus both mention bloody sweats as attending some extraordinary agony of mind; and I find Leti, in his life of Pope Sextus V. p. 200, and Sir John Chardin, in his History of Persia, Vol. I. p. 126, mentioning a like phenomenon; to which Dr. Jackson, (in his Works, Vol. II. p. 819.) adds another from Thuanus, lib. x. p. 221.—Dr. Scott and Mr. Fleming both imagine that Christ now struggled with the spirits of darkness: the former says he was now surrounded with a mighty host of devils, who exercised all their force and malice to persecute and distract his innocent soul; and the latter supposes that Satan hoped, by overpowering him here, to have prevented the accomplishment of the prophecies relating to the manner and circumstances of his death. (See Scott's Christian life, Vol. III. p. 149, and Fleming's Christology, Vol. II. p. 130.) But however this be, I can hardly think, as Dr. Scott suggests, that there was some supernatural agency of those evil spirits in the drowsiness of the disciples, since the sacred historian is silent on this head, and refers it to another cause.

at hand that doth be-tray me. [Mark xiv. 42.]

just at hand. Accordingly Judas and his retinue immediately appeared, and seized him in the manner which will be next related. SECT. CLXXXII.

IMPROVEMENT.

ON the most transient survey of this amazing story we cannot but fall into deep admiration. What *a sight* is here! Let our souls *turn aside* to behold it with a becoming temper: and surely we must wonder how the *disciples* could *sleep* in the midst of a scene which might almost have awakened rocks and trees to compassion. Mat. xxvi. 40, 43

Behold *the Prince of life*, God's incarnate and only-begotten Son, *drinking of the brook in the way*, (Psal. cx. 7.) and not only tasting, but drawing in full draughts of that bitter *cup* which his *heavenly Father* put into his hands on this awful occasion. Let us behold him *kneeling*, and even *prostrate on the ground*, and there pouring out his *strong cries and tears to him that was able to save him from death.* (Heb. v. 7.) Let us view him in this *bloody agony*, and say, *If these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* (Luke xxiii. 31.) If even Christ himself was so depressed with *sorrow* and *amazement*, and the distress and anguish he endured were such, that in his *agony* the *sweat* ran from him *like great drops of blood*, when *our iniquities were laid upon him*, and it *pleased the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief*, (Isa. liii. 6, 10.) how must the sinner then be filled with horror, and with what dreadful *agonies* of anguish and despair will he be overwhelmed, when he shall bear the burden of *his own iniquities*, and God shall *pour out all his wrath* upon him? Behold, how *fearful a thing it is, to fall into the hands of the living God?* (Heb. x. 31.) Luke xxii. 41, 42, Mark xiv. 35. Luke xxii. 44.

Here was no human enemy near our blessed *Redeemer*; yet such invisible *terror set themselves in array against* him, that his very *soul* was *poured out like water*; nor was there any circumstance of his sufferings in which he discovered a greater commotion of spirit. Nevertheless, his pure and holy soul bare all this without any irregular perturbation. *In all this* he *sinned not* by a murmuring word, or an impatient thought: he shone the brighter for the *furnace of affliction*, and gave us at once the most wonderful and the most amiable pattern of *resignation* to the Divine disposal, when he said, *Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*—May this be our language under every trial! *Lord*, we could wish it was; and we would maintain a holy watchfulness over our own souls, that we may be so! But in this respect, as well as in every other, we find that even when *the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.* How happy is it for us that the *blessed* Mat. xxvi. 38. 39, 42 41

SECT. CLXXXII. *Jesus knows our frame,* and has *learnt,* by what *he himself suffered* in our frail nature, to make the most compassionate allowance for its various infirmities! Let us learn to imitate this his gentle and gracious conduct, even *in an hour* of so much *distress.* Let us bear with, and let us pity each other, not aggravating every neglect of our friends into a crime; but rather speaking of their faults in the mildest terms, and making the most candid excuses for what we cannot defend. Let us exercise such a temper, even in the most gloomy and dejected moments of life; which surely may well be expected of us, who ourselves need so much compassion and indulgence almost from every one with whom we converse; and, which is infinitely more, who owe our *all* to the forbearance of that God, *of whose mercy it is, that we are not* utterly *consumed.*

SECT. CLXXXIII.

Jesus is betrayed by Judas, and seized by the guard, to whom, after glorious displays of his power, he voluntarily surrenders himself, and is then forsaken by all his disciples. Mat. XXVI. 47—56. Mark XIV. 43—52. Luke XXII. 47—53. John XVIII. 2—12.

JOHN XVIII. 2.

SECT. CLXXXIII. John XVIII. 2 NOW when our Lord was thus retired to the garden, *Judas also that betrayed him knew the place; for Jesus often resorted thither* in company *with his disciples,*[a] and had particularly done it again and again since his coming up to spend this passover at Jerusalem. (Compare Luke xxi. 37, p. 399.) 3 *Judas therefore taking* with him *a band* [*of soldiers,*] or a Roman cohort, with their captain, (see ver. 12.) *and* some Jewish *officers,* sent for that purpose *from the chief priests and* other *Pharisees* belonging to the sanhedrim, who were chiefly concerned in this affair, *comes thither with torches and lamps, and* hostile *weapons;* which they brought

JOHN XVIII. 2. AND Judas also which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

[a] *Jesus often resorted thither with his disciples.*] It was probably a garden which belonged to one of Christ's friends, and to which he had a liberty of retiring whenever he pleased. And here accordingly he often used to spend some considerable time in prayer and pious converse, in the evenings or nights after his indefatigable labours in the city and temple by day. It is indeed amazing how flesh and blood could go through such incessant fatigues; but it is very probable, Christ might exert some miraculous power over his own animal nature to strengthen it for such difficult services, and to preserve it in health and vigour; otherwise the copious dews which fall by night in those parts, must have been very dangerous, (as I have elsewhere hinted, sect. lxxxvi. note [e],) especially when the body was heated by preaching in the day, and often by travelling several miles on foot.

with them, though it was now full moon, to use their arms, if they should meet with any opposition, or to discover him by their lights, if he should go about to hide himself, as they foolishly imagined he might, among the private walks or other recesses of the garden. 3

MARK XIV. 43. And immediately, while he yet spake, [lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came,] and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes, and the elders [of the people.] [Mat. xxvi. 47. Luke xxii. 47.—]

And immediately, while he was yet speaking to his disciples, and giving them the alarm mentioned in the close of the last section, *behold*, this very *Judas*, *one of the twelve* apostles, *came* into the garden, *and with him a great multitude* of persons of very different stations and offices in life, who were sent with authority *from the chief priests, and scribes, and elders of the people*; and, more effectually to execute their orders, they were armed *with swords and staves*, to seize him by violence, if any resistance should be made to the attempt; and there were also with them some persons of superior rank and quality, who, full of impatient and malicious zeal, could not forbear mingling themselves with the dregs of the people upon this infamous occasion. (See Luke xxii. 52. p. 492.) *Now he* 44 *that betrayed him went* a little *before* the rest of *them*; [*and*] that they might not be mistaken in the person, he *had given them a signal*, by which they might distinguish Jesus from any others who might chance to be with him,[b] *saying*, *He whom I shall kiss* at my first entering into the garden, *is the person* you are commissioned to take;[c] be sure therefore to *lay hold of him* immediately, *and lead him away safely*; for he has sometimes made strange escapes from those that have attempted to take him, and if he get away from you after this signal, it will be your fault, and not mine.[d] *And* accordingly, 45 *being come* into the garden, *he drew near to Je-*

Mark xiv. 43

44 And he that betrayed him [Luke, went before them, *and*] had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, [hold him fast,] and lead *him* away safely. [Mat. xxvi. 48. Luke xxii. —47.—]

45 And as soon as he was come, he

[b] *Had given them a signal.*] As those that came to apprehend him were strangers to Jesus, and it was now night, and there were twelve persons together, probably dressed much alike, such a signal might be thought more necessary.

[c] *He whom I shall kiss is the person.*] It is indeed probable, as Dr. Guyse and others observe, that our Lord, in great condescension, had used (according to the Jewish custom) to permit his disciples thus to salute him, when they returned to him after having been any time absent.

[d] *Lead him away safely*; for he has sometimes made strange escapes, &c.] Compare Luke iv. 30; John viii. 59; x. 39. —I am ready to imagine, from this precaution, that Judas might suspect that Christ would on this occasion renew the miracles he had formerly wrought for his own deliverance; though he had so expressly declared the contrary. See Mat. xxvi. 24, sect. clxx.

SECT. CLXXXIII.

Mat. XIV. 45

sus to kiss him, as a signal to the company to seize him; [*and*] *going directly to him*, with an air of the greatest respect, as if he had been impatient of his absence during those few hours which had passed since he saw him last, and was quite transported with joy to meet him again, *he said*, with the fairest appearances of duty and friendship, *Hail* to thee, *Rabbi, Rabbi!* May the greatest pleasure and happiness continually attend thee! *And* upon this he *kissed him.*

[Luke, drew near unto Jesus to kiss him; *and*] goeth straightway to him, and saith, [Hail] Master, Master; and kissed him. [Mat. xxvi. 49. Luke xxii.—47.]

Mat. xxvi. 50

But Jesus, well understanding the perfidious purposes concealed under this fond address, answered with great mildness, yet with becoming spirit, and *said to him, Friend, wherefore art thou come?* and whence is all this ceremony and transport? Think of it, *Judas!* Is this the friendship thou hast so often boasted? Alas, *dost thou betray* him whom thou canst not but know to be *the Son of man, with* such a treacherous *kiss?*[e] And dost thou think, that he can be imposed upon by this pour artifice? or that God, who has promised him so glorious and triumphant a kingdom, will not punish such baseness and cruelty to him?

MAT. XXVI. 50. —[But] Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? [Judas betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?] [Luke xxii. 48.]

John xviii. 4

Then Jesus, though he fully understood what was to follow this perfidious salutation, as *knowing all* the dreadful *things that were coming upon him*,[f] yet did not attempt to escape, or to withdraw himself out of the power of his enemies: nevertheless he determined to shew them that he could easily have done it; and therefore,

JOHN XVIII. 4. Jesus therefore knowing all things that should come upon

[e] *Dost thou betray the Son of man with a kiss?*] There is great reason to believe that our Lord uses this phrase of *the Son of man* to Judas on this occasion, (as he had done the same evening at supper twice in a breath,) in the sense here given; (compare note [i], on Mat. xxvi. 24. sect. clxx.) and it adds a spirit to these words that has not often been observed, which the attentive reader will discern to be attended with much greater strength and beauty, than if our Lord had only said, *Dost thou betray* me *with a kiss?*

[f] *Knowing all things that were coming upon him.*] Our Lord not only knew in general, that he should suffer some great evil, and even death itself, but was acquainted also with all the particular circumstances of ignominy and horror that should attend his sufferings: which accordingly he largely foretold, (see Mat. xx. 18, 19. and the parallel places, p. 257.) though many of these circumstances were as contingent as can well be imagined.—It is impossible to enter aright into the heroic behaviour of our Lord Jesus Christ, without carrying this circumstance along with us. The critics are in raptures at the gallantry of Achilles in going to the Trojan war, when he knew, (according to Homer) that he should fall there: but he must have a very low way of thinking, who does not see infinitely more fortitude in our Lord's conduct on this great occasion, when this circumstance so judiciously, though modestly suggested by St. John, is duly attended to.

him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

as they now, upon the signal that was given them, were drawing near to seize him, he *went forth* towards his enemies, *and said to them*, with the greatest composure of mind, *Whom do you* come to *seek* here? And *they* were so confounded at the air of majesty and intrepidity with which he appeared, that without saying they were come for him, they only *answered him*, We are come to seek *Jesus the Nazarene*. *Jesus says to them*, You have the person then before you; *I am* [*he.*] *And Judas also who betrayed him*, then *stood with them*; and he who formerly had followed Christ as one of his disciples, now sorted with his open and avowed enemies. *Then as soon as he had said to them*, *I am* [*he,*] there went forth such a secret energy of Divine power with those words, that all their united force was utterly unable to resist it, so that *they* presently *drew back*, as afraid to approach him, though unarmed and unguarded; *and fell* at once *to the ground*,[g] as if they had been struck with lightning. Yet a few moments after, recovering from this consternation, they arose and rallied again; and *then* as they came up the second time, *he asked them again*, *Whom do ye seek? And they said* to him as before, *Jesus the Nazarene*. *Jesus answered* them, *I have* already *told you that I am* [*he:*] *If therefore you seek me* alone, you may *let these* my companions and friends *go their way* in safety;[h] and indeed I shall insist upon that as

SECT. CLXXXIII. John XVIII. 4

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also which betrayed him, stood with them.

5

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward and fell to the ground.

6

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

7

8 Jesus answered I have told you that I am *he*. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

8

[g] *They drew back, and fell to the ground.*] As there were scribes and priests among them, they must have read of the destruction of those companies which came to seize the prophet Elijah, (2 Kings i. 10, 12;) a fact which bore so great a resemblance to this, that it is an amazing instance of the most obdurate wickedness, that they should venture to renew the assault on Christ, after so sensible an experience both of his power and mercy. Nothing seems more probable, than that these wretches might endeavour to persuade themselves and their attendants, that this strange repulse was effected by some demon in confederacy with Jesus, who opposed the execution of justice upon him; and they might, perhaps, ascribe it to the special providence of God, rather than to the indulgence of Jesus, that they had received no farther damage. The most corrupt heart has its reasonings to support it, in its absurdest notions and most criminal actions.

[h] *Let these go their way.*] What tenderness was here towards those who had so lately neglected him, (sleeping while he was in such an extreme agony,) that yet he would not suffer them to be terrified by so much as a short imprisonment! and the words also intimate, that he intended presently to dismiss them, as probably not thinking it convenient to appear before his judges with such an attendance. His disciples, perhaps, might consider this speech as an excuse for their forsaking him; but had they viewed it in a just light, it would rather have appeared a strong engagement upon them to have waited for that fair dismission which our Lord seemed about to give them.

SECT. CLXXXIII. a condition of surrendering myself to you, which you may easily perceive I could refuse if I thought fit. And this he said, *that the saying*

John XVIII. 9 *he uttered* before, *might* farther *be* illustrated and *accomplished*, "*Of those whom thou*, my "heavenly Father, *hast given me, I have lost*, "and will lose, *none*."[i] (See John xvii. 12, p. 469.)

9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.

Mat. xxvi. 50 And *then*, as he was speaking this, *they* that were sent to apprehend him *came, and laid their hands upon Jesus, and took him* prisoner, without his making any manner of resistance. *Now*

Luke xxii. 49 upon this, *when his disciples saw* that they had seized him, and began to apprehend *what would be the consequence* of these things, *they said to him, Lord, shall we smite* these impious wretches *with the sword?* for we doubt not, but as few as we are, thou canst render us victorious over

Mat. xxvi. 51 this armed multitude. *And*, without staying for his answer, *behold, one of them that were with Jesus*, [*even*] *Simon Peter*,[k] *having a sword, stretched out his hand, and drew it* with a rash inconsiderate zeal, *and smote a servant of the high-priest, whose name was Malchus*, who was one of the forwardest, and seemed peculiarly officious in seizing Christ;[l] *and* he struck full at his head, intending to cleave him down, but the stroke glanced a little on one side, so that he only *cut off his right ear*.

MAT. XXVI. 50. Then came they, and laid [their] hands on Jesus, and took him. [Mark xiv. 46.]

LUKE XXII. 49. When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord shall we smite with the sword?

MAT. XXVI. 51. And behold one of them which were with Jesus, [John, *even* Simon Peter, having a sword,] stretched out his hand, and [John, drew it, and] struck a servant of the high-priest's, [John, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.] [Mark xiv. 47. Luke xxii. 50. John xviii, 10.]

52 *Then Jesus*, being determined to surrender himself into the hands of his enemies, and still to shew that such a surrender was the effect,

52 Then said Je-

[i] *I have lost none.*] Jansenius justly observes, that it was a remarkable instance of the power of Christ over the spirits of men, that they so far obeyed his word as not to seize Peter when he had cut off the ear of Malchus; or John, while he stood by the cross, though they must know them to have been of the number of his most intimate associates.

[k] *Even Simon Peter.*] None of the evangelists but John, mentions the name of Peter on this occasion; which, perhaps, the others omitted, lest it should expose him to any prosecution; but John, writing long after his death, needed no such precaution.

[l] *Smote a servant of the high-priest* &c.] One would have thought, as Bishop Hall observes, he should rather have struck Judas; but the traitor, perhaps, on giving the signal, had mingled himself with the crowd; or Peter might not understand the treacherous design of his kiss; or seeing Malchus more eager than the rest in his attack on Christ, he might postpone all other resentments to indulge the present sally of his indignation. —Though this might seem a courageous action, it was really very imprudent; and had not Christ by some secret influence overawed their spirits, it is very probable, (as the pious Sir Matthew Hale observes,) that not only Peter, but the rest of the apostles, would have been cut to pieces. (Hale's Contemplations, p. 254.)

sus unto [Peter], Put up again thy sword into [the sheath]; for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. [John xviii. 11.—]

not of compulsion, but of choice, *said unto Peter, Return thy sword into the sheath again: for* will not have recourse to this, or any other method of defence: and indeed, *all that take the sword shall perish by the sword,* and they that are most ready to take up arms are commonly the first that will fall by them; which might be intended as an intimation, that the Jews, who were now drawing the sword against him, should ere long perish by it in a very miserable manner, as they quickly after did in the Roman war: and that the sword of Divine vengeance, in one form or another, would quickly find out all its implacable enemies. And besides, Peter, *dost thou think* that I want the aid of thy feeble arm, and *that I cannot now entreat my Father, and* have such interest with him, that *he would presently furnish me with* a celestial army for my guard, marshalled in dreadful array, and consisting of *more than twelve legions of angels?* [m]

SECT. CLXXXIII. Mat. XXVI. 52

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

53

54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

But how then, if I should thus stand on my defence, *shall the scriptures be fulfilled,* even the very prophecies which I came to accomplish, which have so expressly foretold, *that thus it must be?* Or how should I approve my submission to him that sent me? You only look at second causes, and have but an imperfect view of things; but I consider all the sufferings I am now to meet as under a Divine direction and appointment, and regard them as *the cup which my Father has given me;* and, when considered in that view, *shall I not* willingly submit to *drink it?* Shall I not acquiesce in what I know to be his will? or would it be the part of a dutiful and affectionate Son to dispute the determinations of his paternal wisdom and love?

54

John xviii. 11.

John XVIII.—11. The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

12 Then the band,

Then without any opposition he surrendered himself into the hands of those that came to apprehend him: and all uniting in their enmity against him, *the band* of Roman soldiers, *with*

12

[m] *More than twelve legions of angels.*] The Roman armies were composed of legions, which did not always consist of the same number of men, but are computed at this time to have contained above six thousand; and twelve legions were more than were commonly intrusted with their greatest generals. (See note [e] on Luke viii. 30, Vol. I. p. 383.) How dreadfully irresistible would such an army of angels have been, when one of these celestial spirits was able to destroy 185,000 Assyrians at one stroke! 2 Kings xix. 35.

SECT. CLXXXIII. Luke XXII. 51.

the captain at their head, *and the Jewish officers* that came with them, *seized Jesus* as a malefactor, *and* presently *bound him* to prevent his escape. *But* as they were binding him, *Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye* at least that I may have my hands at liberty *thus far*, and stay but for a moment, while I add one act of power and compassion to those I have already done: *and* calling Malchus to him, *he touched his ear, and* immediately *healed him.*[n]

and the captain and officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him.

LUKE XXII. 51. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far? And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 *Then Jesus said in that same hour to the chief priests, and to the captains of the temple* guard,[o] *and to the elders* of the people, or to those members of the sanhedrim *who*, (as was said before, p. 487,) *were* so forgetful of the dignity of their character, as to *come to him* themselves with the dregs of the populace, at this unseasonable time, and on this infamous occasion: to these he said, [*and*] *to the multitude* that now surrounded him, For what imaginable reason *are you come out* against me, *as against a robber* that would make a desperate resistance, armed in this way *with swords and staves*, as if you came *to seize me* at 53 the hazard of your lives? *When I was with you every day*, as I have been for some time past, [*and*] publicly *sat teaching in the temple*, you had opportunities enough to have secured me, if there was any crime with which you could have charged me; yet then *you did not appre-*

52 Then Jesus said [in that same hour] unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him [*and* to the multitudes], Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves [for to take me?] [Mat. xxvi. 55.—Mark xiv. 48.]

53 When I was daily with you, [*and* sat teaching] in the temple, ye [Mark, took me not, *and*] stretched forth no hands against me:

[n] *He touched his ear, and healed him.*] As this was an act of great compassion, so likewise it was an instance of singular wisdom; for it would effectually prevent those reflections and censures on Jesus, which the rashness of Peter's attack might otherwise have occasioned.

[o] *The captains of the temple.*] There was indeed a Roman guard and commanding officer which attended near the temple during the time of the great feasts, in order to prevent any sedition of the Jews: (see Josceph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 4. [al. 6], § 3; and Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 5 [al. vi. 6], § 8.) And this appears to be the band and captain mentioned here by John, ver. 12, where the word in the original is χιλιαρχος which plainly shews it was *a Roman officer*, and is the title given to Lysias, (Acts xxi. 31, *& seq.*) who was commander of the garrison kept by the Romans in the castle of Antonia; from whence there were detachments sent at the time of the feasts, and posted in the porticos of the temple, to suppress any tumults among the people, when such great numbers flocked together. But for these captains of the temple spoken of by Luke, there is no doubt but they were Jewish officers, who are said by John to have attended with the former; of whom it is to be observed, that as the priests kept watch in three places of the temple, and the Levites in twenty-one, so their leaders were called στρατηγοι του ἱερου, or *captains of the temple*; and Josephus more than once speaks of one of the Jewish priests by this title, (Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 6 [al. 5], § 2; cap. 9 [al. 8], § 3, and Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 17, § 2.) (See Dr. Whitby in loc. and Dr. Lardner's Credib. part i. Vol. I. book i. ch. ii. § 15.)

but this is your hour, and the power of darkness. [Mat. xxvi.—55. Mark xiv. 49.—]

hend me, [*or*] offer to *stretch out* [*your*] *hands against me. But* I know the reason better than you yourselves do: you have hitherto been kept under a secret restraint, which is now removed; and *this is your hour,* in which God has let you loose against me, *and the power of darkness* is now permitted to rage with peculiar violence; for it is under the instigation of Satan and his infernal powers that you now act, with whatever pious names you may affect to consecrate the deed. *And* in *all this* I know, that both you and they are secretly over-ruled by Divine Providence, to accomplish events most contrary to your own schemes; and it *is done, that* what is written concerning me in *the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.*[p] I therefore resign myself into your hands, though I have given you abundant evidence that I am not destitute of the means of deliverance, if I was inclined to use them.

SECT. CLXXXIII. Luke XXII. 53 Mat. xxvi. 56

MAT. XXVI. 56. —But all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. [Mark xiv.—49.]

—56 Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. [Mark xiv. 50.]

Then all the disciples, who but a little while before had solemnly protested that they would never leave him, when they now saw him bound in the hands of his enemies, according to his repeated predictions, *forsook him and fled;*[q] each of them shifting for his own safety as well as he could, and seeking to shelter himself either among friends or strangers.

MARK XIV. 51. And there followed him a certain young

And a certain youth, who was lodged in a house near the garden, and was waked by the

Mark xiv. 51

[p] *That the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.*] This was a consideration, which, if duly applied, might have prevented his disciples from being offended at his sufferings: and it strongly intimates, that he still kept up the claim which he had formerly made of being the Messiah; and that what he was now to go through, was so far from being at all inconsistent with that claim, that, on the whole, it was absolutely necessary, in order to make it out to full satisfaction.

[q] *All the disciples forsook him and fled.*] Perhaps they were afraid that the action of Peter should be imputed to them all, and might bring their lives into danger. But whatever they apprehended their precipitate flight in these circumstances, was the basest cowardice and ingratitude; considering, not only how lately they had been warned of their danger, and what solemn promises they had made of a courageous adherence to Christ; but also what an agony they had just seen him in, what zeal he had a few moments before shewed in their defence, and what amazing power he had exerted to terrify his enemies into a compliance with that part of his demand which related to the safety of his friends. He had also at the same time intimated his purpose of giving them a speedy and kind dismission; so that it was very indecent thus to run away without it, especially as Christ's prophecy of their continued usefulness in his church, was equivalent to a promise of their preservation, whatever danger they might now meet with. But our Lord probably permitted it, that we might learn not to depend too confidently even on the friendship of the very best of men.

SECT. CLXXXIII. noise of this tumult, *having* an affection for Jesus, and apprehending him in danger, arose out of bed with nothing but *a linen cloth* in which
Mark XIV. 51 he lay, *thrown about his naked body;* and he *followed him* a little way after the rest of his disciples were gone, transported into a forgetfulness of his own dress, by his concern for Jesus: *and the young men* that made a part of the guard, suspecting he was one that belonged to
52 Jesus, *laid hold on him. But he, leaving the sheet* which was wrapped about him in their hands, *fled away from them naked,* in the utmost consternation. After which Jesus was led to the palace of the high-priest, and condemned there, in the manner which will presently be related.

man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him.

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

IMPROVEMENT.

THE heroic behaviour of the blessed *Jesus,* in the whole period of his *sufferings,* will easily make itself observed by every
John xviii. 4 attentive eye, though the sacred historians, according to their
Mat. xxvi. 50 usual, but wonderful simplicity, make no encomiums upon it. With what composure does he go forth to meet the traitor! with what calmness does he receive that malignant *kiss!* With what dignity does he deliver himself into the hands of his *enemies,*
52, 53 yet plainly shewing his superiority over them, and *leading* as it were even then *captivity captive!*

John xviii. 8 We see him generously capitulating for the *safety of his friends,*
9, 11 while he neglected *his own;* and afterwards, not only *forbidding* all the *defence* they attempted to make, but *curing* that *wound* which one of his enemies had received in this assault on him. With what meek majesty did he say, *Suffer ye* at least *thus far! And he touched his ear, and healed him.*
Luke xxii. 51 We hear his words, we behold his actions with astonishment: but surely our indignation must rise within us, when we see so amiable and excellent a Per-
47, 48 son thus injured and abused; when we see *the Son of man betrayed with a kiss: betrayed* by his intimate friend, who had *eaten of*
Mat. xxvi. 56 *his bread,* and yet *lifted up his heel against him;* (John xiii. 18.) and at the same time *forsaken by all his disciples,* even by him whom he most tenderly *loved,* and who had so often *leant on his bosom.* Let us not wonder, if some of our *friends* prove false; and others seem to forget us, when we have the greatest need of their assistance. When we deserve so much less *friendship* than *Christ* did, let us not think it strange, if we find but little more. Nor can we reasonably be so much amazed, as we might otherwise have been, to see sinners going on under the most awful
John xviii. 6, 12 *rebukes* of Providence; when we consider that these wretches, who had been *struck down to the ground* by one *word* of *Christ's*

mouth, should immediately *rise up* and stretch forth their impious hands against him, to *seize and bind him;* though they might well have known that they lived only by his indulgence and forbearance, and that the same *word* that *struck them down to the ground* could have laid them *dead* there. *Touch our hearts, O Lord,* by thy *grace,* or it will be in vain that we are *smitten* with thy *rod!* SECT. CLXXXIII.

In all the remainder of this story, let us remember that *Jesus* voluntarily *gave himself up* to *sufferings,* which he circumstantially foreknew; even though he could have commanded to his assistance whole *legions of angels. His Father's will* was an answer to all that nature could plead in its own cause; and the good hand from which *this cup* of his severest sufferings came, reconciled him to all the bitterest ingredients it contained. How reasonable then is it, that we, who, having *had fathers of our flesh that corrected us,* submitted to the rod, and *gave them reverence,* should *much rather,* after the example of our innocent and holy Redeemer, *be in subjection to the Father of* our *spirits, and live!* (Heb. xii. 9.) Mat. xxvi. 53 John xviii. 11

SECT. CLXXXIV.

Jesus is conducted to the palace of Caiaphas; Peter follows him thither, and denies him thrice. Mat. XXVI. 57, 58. 69, *to the end.* Mark XIV. 53, 54. 66, *to the end.* Luke XXII. 54,—62. John XVIII. 13—18. 24—27.

JOHN XVIII. 13.

JOHN XVIII. 13.

AND *they* led him away to Annas first, (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.)

THE officers *and* people having thus apprehended Jesus, in the manner described above, *they led him away* from the garden of Gethsemane to those who had employed them, and brought him *first to* the house of *Annas; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was high-priest that year*[a], or bore the office at that time: SECT. CLXXXIV. John XVIII. 13

[a] *Led him away first to Annas,* &c.] It appears from Josephus (Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 2. [al. 3.] § 2. p. 873. Havercamp.) that Annas, whom he calls Ananus, had been high-priest before his son-in-law Caiaphas; and it seems to have been by his interest, that first Eleazar his own son, and then Caiaphas, who married his daughter, and probably had been his deputy, obtained that dignity: so that though he had resigned that office himself, yet the people paid so much regard to his experience, that they brought Jesus first to him; who, no doubt, took all necessary care to prepare Caiaphas for receiving him, as he could not but know that this was a most critical juncture. We do not read of any thing remarkable which passed at the house of Annas; for which reason his being carried thither is omitted by the other evangelists. Cyril adds και απεστειλαν αυτον δεδεμενον προς Καιαφαν τον Αρχιερεα, *and they sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest;* which addition Erasmus, Beza, and many others have thought it necessary to admit, both to account for the word πρωτον, *first,* in the preceding clause, and to reconcile

SECT. CLXXXIV. John XVIII. 24 *And Annas sent him bound to Caiaphas the high-priest*, as judging it most proper, that the rest of the council should upon this occasion be convened at his palace. *Now* this *Caiaphas was* 14 *he* whom we mentioned above, (John xi. 49—51, sect 141.) *who gave* it as his *advice to the Jews, that it was fit, that one man*, though innocent, *should die for* the preservation of *the people:* in which words he uttered a kind of oracle, which (as we there observed) contained a far nobler and sublimer sense than he himself intended or understood.

24 (Now Annas—sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high-priest.)

14 Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Mat. xxvi. 57. *And they who had apprehended Jesus, took and led him away* from Annas like a criminal in bonds, *and* according to the directions which Annas had given them, *brought him to the palace of Caiaphas the high-priest; where*, though it was now the dead time of the night, *all the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders*, or the chief persons of the sanhedrim, with their proper officers, met together on a summons from Caiaphas, and *were assembled with him*, waiting for Jesus to be brought before them.

MAT. XXVI. 57. And they that had laid hold on Jesus [Luke, took him and] led *him* away, [Luke, and brought him into the house of] Caiaphas the high-priest; where [all the chief priests, and] the scribes, and the elders were assembled [with him.] [Mark xiv. 53. Luke xxii. 54—]

John xviii. 15. *And* though *Simon Peter* had at first forsaken Christ, and shifted for himself, as the rest of his companions did, yet afterward he *and another disciple*, even the evangelist John, bethought themselves, and determined to return; and accordingly they *followed Jesus afar off*[b], desiring to see what would become of him: *and* as *that* other *disciple was known to the high-priest*,[c] he was admitted without any objection or impediment, *and went into the palace of the high-priest, with Jesus*, and the guard that attended him.

JOHN XVIII. 15. And Simon Peter followed Jesus [afar off,] and *so did* another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high-priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high-priest. [Mat. xxvi. 58.—Mark xiv. 54.—Luke xxii.—54.]

16 *But Peter*, who had no interest or acquaintance there, *stood* waiting *without at the door: that*

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that

John with the other evangelists, who all agree, that the scene of Peter's fall was the palace of Caiaphas, not of Annas. Yet, as almost the same words occur in ver. 24, it is sufficient to transpose that verse, and introduce it here; which is intimated in the margin of some of our Bibles.—For the phrase of being high-priest that year, see note [a] on John xi. 49. p. 252.

[b] *Followed Jesus afar off.*] It appears from hence, that Peter and John recovered themselves quickly after their flight, or else they could not have followed him at some distance, and yet be so near as to be ready to go into Caiaphas's house with him.

[c] *That disciple was known to the high-priest.*] We cannot imagine the acquaintance was very intimate, considering the great diversity of their rank and station in life; but a thousand occurrences occasion some knowledge of each other, between persons whose conditions are as unequal.

other disciple which was known unto the high-priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

other disciple therefore, who was known to the high-priest, went out of the inner-room, into which Jesus was then carried in order to his examination, *and spake to her that kept the door* to open it; *and* so by her consent *brought in Peter.* SECT. CLXXXIV. John XVIII. 16.

Luke XXII. 55. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them [with the servants to see the end.] [Mark, and warmed himself at the fire.] [Mat. xxvi. 58. Mark xiv.—54.]

And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the large *hall, and were set down together, Peter,* hoping to pass undiscovered by mingling with the rest of the company, *sat down among them with the servants,* that he might be at hand *to see the end* of this affair, *and warmed himself at the fire,* while they were examining Jesus with circumstances which we shall afterwards mention.[d] Luke xxii. 55.

Mark XIV. 66. And as Peter [sat without] beneath in the palace, there cometh [unto him] one of the maids of the high-priest. [John, the damsel that kept the door.] [Mat. xxvi. 69.—John xviii. 17.—]

And, during the time that this important event was depending, *as Peter was sitting* among the servants *without* the room where Jesus was examined, and thought to have continued unsuspected *in the hall below, there came to him one of the maid-servants* belonging to the family *of the high-priest,* who was indeed *the* same *damsel that* (as we just now said) had *kept the door: And* Mark xiv. 66.

67 And when she saw Peter [Luke, as he sat by the fire] warming himself, she looked, [Luke, earnestly] upon him, and said, [Luke, This man was also with him:] [John, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disci-

67 *seeing Peter as he sat warming himself by the fire, she fixed her eyes earnestly upon him, and* observing in his countenance the appearance of great concern, she *said* to some that stood near her, I cannot but think that *this man* is a follower of Jesus, and *was also* one that used to be *with him:*[e] and upon this presumption she charged him directly with it, and said, Tell us truly, *Art not thou* thyself *also* [*one*] *of this man's disciples?*[f]

[d] *And warmed himself at the fire,* while they were examining Jesus, *&c.*] It is remarkable, that all the evangelists record the fall of Peter, and none with circumstances of greater aggravation than Mark, whose gospel is said to have been reviewed by Peter himself, and indeed written from his preaching. (See note [d] on Mark xiv. 31, p. 478.)—Though Christ's examination happened during this interval, (which occasions Matthew, Mark, and John to interrupt this story to recount that), I rather chose as Luke has done, to take the whole of it together, as best suiting the design of this work.

[e] *This man was also with him.*] Her sex, and perhaps we may add, her office, will not permit us to suppose that she had been in the garden with the multitude that apprehended Jesus: she therefore must guess by Peter's countenance, that he was one of his friends; unless possibly she had seen them together in the temple or elsewhere.

[f] *Art not thou also one of this man's disciples?*] One would imagine from the word [*also*], when it is read in the connection John has placed it in, that in this question she referred to John; as if she had said, Art not thou one, as well as thy companion? And, if this were admitted, it would be a plain intimation, that John acknowledged himself a disciple of Christ. But it must be owned, that the other evangelists used the same word [*also,*] though they say nothing of John's being with Peter.

SECT. CLXXXIV.

There is a great deal of room to think it; *yea*, I am fully satisfied that *thou wast also with* him, even with this *Jesus the Nazarene of Galilee*, who is now on his trial. *And* Peter was so surprized at this unexpected discovery, that *he* roundly and confidently *denied him before them all*,[g] *and said, Woman*, I profess that *I am not* his disciple; nay, that *I do not* so much as *know him*;[h] *nor do I understand what thou meanest* in charging me with being one of his associates; for I am sure thou mightest as well have fixed on any other person in the company. *And* upon this, turning away as one who was affronted at the charge, *he went out into the portico*;[i] *and* while he was there *the cock crew*.[k]

Luke XXII. 57.

Mark xiv. 68.

And the servants and officers who had brought Jesus thither, and were now waiting for the issue of his trial, still *stood there* in the hall, *having* (as was before observed) *made a* large *fire of coals; for* they had been abroad in the night, and *it was cold*,[l] *and they were warming themselves* at the fire. *And Simon Peter*, having staid a while in the portico, where he not only must have been incommoded by the sharpness of the air, but was, no doubt, in a restless commotion of mind on account of what had passed, came in

John xviii. 18.

ples?] And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth [of Galilee.] [Mat. xxvi. 69. Luke xxii. 56. John xviii. 17.—]

LUKE XXII. 57. And he denied him [before them all], saying, Woman, [John, I am not;] I know him not, [Mark, neither understand I what thou sayest.] Mat. xxvi. 70. Mark xiv. 68. John xviii.—17.]

MARK XIV.—68. And he went out into the porch, and the cock crew.

JOHN XVIII.—18. And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals (for it was cold), and they warmed themselves; and [Simon] Peter stood with them, and warmed himself. [John xviii. 25.—]

[g] *He denied him before them all.*] How must these people be surprised when they saw, (as, no doubt, some of them did,) this timorous disciple within the compass of a few weeks when he was brought with John before the council, not only maintaining the cause and honour of Jesus, but boldly charging the murder of this Prince of life on the chief men of the nation, and solemnly warning them of their guilt and danger in consequence of it, Acts iv. 5—12. Perhaps, when it is said there, (ver. 13.) that *they took knowledge of Peter and John that they had been with Jesus*, the meaning may be, that some of them or their attendants, remembered Peter and John as the two persons who had followed Jesus thus far, when the rest had forsaken him. Compare John xviii. 15, 16.

[h] *I do not know him.*] Jesus was so public a person, and so well known to thousands, not at all in his interest, that this additional falsehood was most unnecessary; and, as it frequently happens, when people allow themselves to transgress the bounds of truth, it was more like to entangle and discover him than to clear him.

[i] *He went out into the portico.*] I apprehend that the word προαυλιον most exactly answers to the Latin word *vestibulum*; by which many interpreters render it. And, considering the magnificence of the Jewish buildings at this time, it is reasonable to conclude, that this which belonged to the high-priest's palace, was some stately piazza or colonnade; and therefore I chose rather to render it *portico*, than *porch*, a word equally applicable to the meanest buildings of that kind.

[k] *The cock crew.*] It is strange this circumstance did not remind him of our Lord's prediction, and bring him to some sense of his sin: perhaps it did; and he might return persuaded, that he should be more courageous if he met with a second attack.

[l] *For it was cold.*] It is well known, that the coldness of the nights is generally more sensible in those hotter countries than among us.

again, and, having mingled with the servants, SECT. *stood* at the fire-side *to warm himself amongst* CLXXXIV. *them. And when he had* thus *been gone out into the portico*, and was returned into the hall, Mat. XXVI. 71. *after a little while another maid saw him again, and said to them that were there* (as her fellow-servant had done just before), Whatever he pretends, I verily believe *this man was also with Jesus of Nazareth: and* presently *she began to say* openly *to them that stood by, Surely this is* [*one*] *of them* that have endeavoured to bring all the nation into confusion, and while he would pass for a friend is crept in hither as a spy. *They therefore*, taking notice of what both these John women had spoken, began to tax him with it, xviii. 25. and *said to him*, What have we a rebel so near us? Let us know plainly who thou art; *art not thou also*, who pretendest to enter these doors as a friend, [*one*] *of his disciples* who has been doing so much mischief? *And*, as he seemed Luke in great confusion, *another man* that stood by, xxii. 58. *saw him* perplexed, and therefore charged it home upon him, *and said*, It is certainly so; *thou art also* [*one*] *of them*, and deservest to suffer with thy Master. *And Peter*, as he could Mat. not bear his being taxed so closely with it, that xxvi. 72. he might take off all suspicion of his belonging unto Jesus, *again denied* [*him*] in the strongest manner, even *with an oath*,[m] *and said, Man*, why dost thou talk thus; I solemnly assure thee, and call God to witness to it, that *I am not* one of them; and that indeed *I do not* so much as *know the man*, but came in hither out of mere curiosity, to learn the occasion of this public alarm, without the least interest in him, or any concern at all on his account, whatever may become of him

And as he still continued there, imagining Luke that he should now be safe from any further xxii. 59. challenge, *after a while, about the space of one hour after* he had thus denied him, *another man* in the company *confidently affirmed* that the for-

MAT. XXVI. 71. And when he was gone out into the porch [Luke, after a little while] another [maid] saw him [again], and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth: [and *she* began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.] [Mark xiv. 69. Luke xxii. 58—]

JOHN XVIII.—25—They said therefore unto him, Are not thou also *one* of his disciples?

LUKE XXII.—58.—And another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them.

MAT. XXVI. 72. And [Luke, Peter] again denied [it] with an oath, [John, and said,] [Luke, Man I am not;] I do not know the man. [Mark xiv. 70.—Luke xxii. — 58. John xviii.—25.]

LUKE XXII. 59. And [after a while] about the space of one hour after, an-

[m] *With an oath.*] Dr. Clarke conjectures, that Peter was suffered to fall fouler than any of the rest of the apostles, (except Judas the traitor), and to make more remarkable mistakes in his conduct, that we might thus be cautioned against that extravagant regard, which would afterwards be demanded to him and his pretended successors. Clarke's seventeen Sermons, No. x. p. 256.

SECT. CLXXXIV.

Luke XXII. 59. Mark. xiv. 70.

nier charge was just, *saying, Of a truth this man was also with him*, and is a follower of this Jesus; *for* it is plain *he also is a Galilean*, and every one knows that most of his disciples are of that country. *And*, upon this *they that stood by came to him, and said to Peter again, Surely* it is as this man asserts; and, notwithstanding thy denying it, there is no room to doubt but *thou art also* [*one*] *of them, for thou art* certainly *a Galilean: and* I know it, said one that was there, by *thy speech:* for such I have observed to be thy dialect and accent, as *agrees* [*to that*] country, [*and*] plainly *discovers thee* to be of Galilee, as most of this man's seditious followers

John xviii. 26

are. And *one of the* domestic *servants of the high-priest, being a relation of his whose ear Peter had cut off*, pressed the charge home upon him, and *said*, How can you have the assurance to deny it? Take heed what you say: *did not I* myself *see thee in the garden with him?*

Mark xxvi. 71

Then Peter, being terrified to the last degree to think of the danger to which he should be exposed if he was discovered to be the person that made the attack on the servant of the high-priest, which might in such a circumstance expose him even to capital punishment, *denied* it *again* more violently than ever; *and*, that he might not any more be called in question, he *began to curse and to swear*, and solemnly to imprecate the judgment of God upon himself if it were so; [*saying*] as he had done before, I tell thee, *man, I know not what thou meanest* by such a false and groundless accusation; *I do not* so much as *know this man of whom you speak*, and was so far from being in the garden with him, that I am absolutely a perfect stranger to him. *And* he had no sooner thus denied him in this shocking manner, but *immediately while he yet spake*, the words of Jesus were fulfilled, and, according to the warning he had given him, *the cock crew the second time.*[n]

other confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a Galilean. [Mat. xxvi. 73.—Mark xiv. —70.—]

MARK XIV.—70. And they that stood by [came unto him, and] said again to Peter, Surely thou [also]art *one* of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto* [*and* bewrayeth thee.] [Mat. xxvi.—73.]

JOHN XVIII. 26. One of the servants of the high-priest (being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

MARK XXVI. 74. Then [John, Peter denied again, and] began to curse and to swear, *saying*, [Luke, Man, I know not what thou sayest;] I know not [this] man [of whom ye speak]. And immediately [Luke, while he yet spake] the cock crew [the second time.] [Mark xiv. 71, 72.—Luke xxii. 60. John xviii. 27.]

[n] *The cock crew.*] To reconcile this with what the Jews pretend, that all the cocks used to be removed out of Jerusalem at the time of the passover, some would render ὁ ἀλεκτωρ ἐφωνησεν, *The watchmen proclaimed the hour of the night:* but this is so unnatural an interpretation, that, rather than admit it, one would question the truth of that Jewish tradition; or conclude, that if the custom it asserts did prevail in Christ's time, some cock was accidentally left behind, or returned

SECT. CLXXXIV.

Luke XXII.

Luke XXII. 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter: and Peter remembered the word of the Lord [Jesus], how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow [Mark, twice], thou shalt deny me thrice. [Mat. xxvi.—75. Mark xiv. 72.—]

And Jesus having been examined by the council in a more retired room, was now brought back into the hall, while they were consulting what they should do with him, so that he stood within hearing when Peter thus ungratefully denied him; and hearing such shocking language from a voice so familiar to him, just as those dreadful words proceeded out of his mouth, *the Lord turned* about, *and looked upon Peter* with a mixture of earnestness and tenderness in his countenance, which, through the secret energy of the Spirit that went along with it, pierced him to the very heart: *and* then *Peter recollected the word of the Lord Jesus, how he had said to him* but that very evening, *Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.* (See Mark xiv. 30. p. 477.) *And Peter* could no longer bear the place, nor stand in the sight of his injured Master, but immediately *went out*[o] quite overwhelmed with grief and shame; *and covering* [*his head*] with his mantle,[p] he seriously reviewed that heinous crime, in which he had discovered so much weakness and ingratitude; and when he attentively thought thereon, and entered into all its aggravating circumstances, *he wept bitterly*, and most earnestly intreated the Divine pardon for so great and inexcusable a sin.

61 62

62 And Peter went out, and [Mark, when he thought thereon, he] wept bitterly: Mat. xxvi. — 75. Mark xiv.—72.]

unobserved to this place. The hurry of such a night as this, might have occasioned much greater neglects than this supposes.

[o] *And Peter went out.*] It is observable, that Luke in two or three lines here calls him *three times* by the name of Peter; that memorable name which Christ had given him with a particular view to that fortitude and resolution with which he was to defend the gospel: perhaps thereby intending to intimate, how low this courageous hero was now fallen, and yet to what a height of holy magnanimity he was afterwards raised, and thereby enabled to stand as a rock in that sacred cause, and so fully to answer the name with which his Master had honoured him.

[p] *And covering his head* with his mantle.] Raphelius, and some learned critics, would render επιβαλων, *throwing himself out of the company* in a passionate manner, which it is very probable he did: but others, and particularly Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 165, 166), and Lambert Bos, (Exercit. p. 21, 22), with much better authority, would translate it, *covering his head*, which was a token of mourning and shame well becoming Peter on this occasion. (Compare 2 Sam. xv. 30; Esth. vi. 12; and Jer. xiv. 3, 4.)—As for our version, [*when he thought thereon*], I can find no passage in antiquity in which the word has such a signification; though to be sure that phrase expresses what was truly the case. I have therefore inserted it in the paraphrase, as I would take every opportunity of paying all the respect to so valuable a translation as ours is in the main.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CLXXXIV. How loudly does this affecting story speak to us in the words of the apostle, *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* (1 Cor. x. 12.) *Peter* professed the warmest zeal; and
Mat. XXVI. 69—74. gave his Lord repeated, and, no doubt, very sincere assurances of the firmest resolution in his cause; and yet except Judas the traitor, none of his brethren fell so low as he. But a few hours before he had been with *Christ* at the sacred table, and had heard from his own lips those gracious discourses, which, as echoed back from his word, do still strike so strongly on the heart of every true believer. He had just seen those words remarkably, and even miraculously, verified, that *Jesus having loved his own that were in the world, loved them to the end.* (John xiii. 1.) How reasonably then might it have been expected, that *his own* should also have continued their most zealous and constant affection to him! But Peter, who, if possible, was more than doubly his as a disciple, as an apostle, as a distinguished intimate, most shamefully denies him; and that not only *once*, but
Mark xxiv. 66—71. a *second*, yea, and a *third* time, even with *oaths* and *curses*, as if he would by that diabolical language give a sensible proof that he did not belong to Christ: and who indeed that had heard it,
John xviii. 15, 16. Luke xxii. 61. would have imagined that he did? Nay, to aggravate it yet farther, it was done in the presence of the other disciple, and even of Christ himself, who surely was much more painfully wounded by this perfidiousness of Peter, than by all the rage and fury of his enemies. *Lord, what is man!* What is our boasted strength but weakness! and, if we are left unto ourselves, how do our most solemn resolutions melt like snow before the sun! *Be thou surety for thy servants for good!* (Psal. cxix. 122.)

ibid. *The Lord turned and looked upon Peter.* So may he graciously *look upon us*, if we at any time make any approach towards the like sin! May he *look upon us* with a glance which shall penetrate our hearts, and cause floods of penitential sorrow to
62 flow forth! *Peter went out and wept bitterly.* He quitted that dangerous scene where temptation had met and vanquished him; and chose retirement and solitude to give vent to his overflowing soul. Thus may we recover ourselves; or rather thus may we be recovered by Divine grace, from those slips and falls, which in this frail state we shall often be making! Let us retire from the business and snares of life; that we may attend to the voice of conscience, and of God speaking by it; and may so taste *the wormwood and the gall*, that our souls may long have them in remembrance. To conclude: let us express the sincerity of godly sorrow, by a more cautious and resolute guard against the occasions of sin, if we would not be found to trifle

with God when we pray *that he would not lead us into temptation, but would deliver us from evil.*

SECT. CLXXXV.

Jesus is examined at the high-priest's hall, and afterwards condemned by the sanhedrim on confessing himself to be the Messiah. Mat. XXVI. 59—68. Mark XIV. 55—65. Luke XXII. 63, *to the end.* John XVIII. 19—23, 28.—

JOHN XVIII. 19.

SECT. CLXXXV. John XVIII. 19

JOHN XVIII. 19. THE high-priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

WE now return to the examination of Jesus before the council, the thread of the story having been a little interrupted on the sad occasion of Peter's fall. *The high-priest therefore asked Jesus*, as he stood before him, *concerning his disciples, and concerning his doctrine:* what it was that he taught, and with what view he had gathered so many followers.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing.

Jesus answered him, and said, What I have taught has been delivered in the most public manner, and *I have spoke* it *openly* and freely *to the world; I have always*, as I had proper opportunity, *taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews continually resort* in the greatest numbers; *and have said nothing in secret*, even to my most intimate friends, but what has been perfectly agreeable to the tenor of my public discourses. *Why dost thou* therefore *ask me*, whose testimony in my own cause will not, to be sure, be much regarded in such a circumstance as this, when I am standing as on a trial for my life? *Ask those that heard me, what I have spoken to them* in the whole series of my ministry; for *behold they know* it, and I am willing to appeal to any impartial person among them, as to the innocence, propriety, and usefulness of *what I have said.*

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, An-

Such was the calm and rational reply which Jesus made to those that examined him. *But when he had spoken these things, one of the officers* belonging to the court, *who* then *stood by*, rudely *gave Jesus a blow*,[a] *saying, Dost thou* pre-

[a] *Gave Jesus a blow.*] As the word ῥαπισμα is supposed by many etymologists to be derived from ῥαβδος, *a staff*, or *stick*, Beza would therefore render it, *he smote*

SECT. CLXXXV.

sume to *answer the high-priest thus*, by sending him to others for a reply to his question?

Mat. XVIII. 23 And *Jesus*, with his usual mildness, *answered him*, *If* thou hast been one of my hearers, and canst say that *I* at any time *have spoken evil*, either of God or man, in the course of my preaching, thou wilt do well to *bear* thy *testimony concerning that evil*: [b] *but if* I have spoken *well*, *why dost thou strike me?* Can reason be answered by blows? or can such a sober appeal to it deserve them?

swerest thou the high-priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?

Mat. xxvi. 59 *Now the chief priests and the elders* of the people, *and the whole sanhedrim*, with all its officers, not being able to make out a sufficient accusation against Jesus from such answers as these, maliciously endeavoured by the vilest means to have something criminal alledged against him; and as they were determined to condemn him, that they might colour over their proceedings with some form of law, they *sought for false evidence against Jesus, that they might put him to death*; and managed the trial in so partial and unjust a manner, that they did in effect invite any of the most infamous of mankind to come and depose against him, with the 60 assurance of being favourably heard: *But they found none* that fully answered their purpose; [c]

MAT. XXVI. 59. Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought [for] false witness against Jesus, to put him to death. [Mark xiv. 55.]

60 — But found none: [for] though

him with a staff; but the word is apparently used for *any blow*; and to limit it, as our translators do, to what we commonly call *a slap on the face*, does not seem reasonable; though Suidas explains it so; and Mat. v. 39, intimates it may have that sense.

[b] *If I have spoken evil*, either of God or man, in the course of my preaching, &c.] The pious and ingenious Mr. Bonnel, (whose exemplary life deserves frequent reading, and whose harmony is in the main very judicious,) is the only writer I have met with, who seems to give the true sense of this clause. He urges the use of the word ελαλησα for *Christ's teaching*, (ver. 20, 21.) and observes, that *bearing witness* could not refer to the answer he had just made to the high-priest; but might properly be used as to the course of his preaching, which the high-priest had not heard. He also supposes, that in Christ's appeal to his hearers, the person who smote Christ was singled out by his eye, among others, as the who had been his auditor; and that the language of the blow was in effect as if he had said, "This is what I "think your preaching deserves." But as he himself seems to assign another reason for this blow, even the pretended rudeness of the answer Christ had made to the high-priest, I have not followed Mr. Bonnel in my paraphrase on the preceding verse. See Bonnel's Harmony, page 362.

[c] *Sought for false evidence,—but found none.*] As this was a great proof of Christ's innocence, (for otherwise his confederates might have been glad to purchase their own security by impeaching him,) so it is a singular instance of the power of God over men's minds that for all the rewards these great men could offer, no two consistent witnesses could be procured to charge him with any gross crime. Possibly the exertion of his miraculous power in striking to the ground those that were most forward to seize him, might intimidate the spirits of some who might otherwise have been prevailed upon.

many false witnesses came, [*and* bare false witness against him,] ye found they none; [*for* their witness agreed not together.] [Mark xiv. 56.]

for though many false witnesses came, [*and*] *falsely testified against him, yet they found none* sufficient; [*for*] *the testimonies* they gave *did not* so far *agree* together, as that a capital sentence could be passed upon him on that evidence; since such a case required, at least, the concurrent oath of two persons. (See Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15.)

SECT. CLXXXV

Mat. XXVI. 59

—60 At the last [there] came two false witnesses, [*who* arose, and bare false witness against him.] [Mark xv. 57.]

61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

At last, there came two false witnesses, [*who*] maliciously wresting some words he had formerly spoken relating to his own death and resurrection, *rose up, and falsely testified against him, Saying,* upon their oaths, *This fellow said,* in our hearing, *I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it* up again *in three days:* and would any one talk of destroying it, unless he was an enemy to that holy place? or think of building it again so soon, unless he was in league with Beelzebub? [*Yea*] one of them, designing to aggravate the matter, confidently affirmed,[d] *We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days* time *I will build* up *another* which shall be *made without* the help of *hands,* in obedience to my command. *Yet neither thus did their testimony* exactly *agree,* nor was sufficient to convict him; as evidently appears from comparing the different words in which it was expressed: and as this difference was observed in court, they could not for shame proceed upon the evidence so as to condemn Jesus to death for words, which no two persons could pretend to ascertain; nor would they indeed have amounted to a capital crime, if they had jointly been charged upon him.

60

61

MARK XIV. 58. We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

Mark xiv. 58.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

59

LUKE XXII. 66.

However, they resolved to try him in full council, even on this slender evidence, hoping that some further discovery would arise in the process of the examination. *And* accordingly,

Luke xxii. 66.

[d] Designing to aggravate the matter, &c.] This is one instance, among many others, in which the bow of malice has been broke by overstraining it, and innocence cleared up by the very extravagance of those charges which had been advanced against it.—It is observable, that the words which they thus misrepresented, were spoken by Christ at least three years before. (Compare John ii. 19, Vol. I. p. 144.) Their going back so far to find matter for the charge they brought, was a glorious, though silent, attestation of the unexceptionable manner in which our Lord had behaved himself during all the course of his public ministry.

SECT. CLXXXV

Luke XXII. 66

Mark xiv. 60.

61

Luke xxii. 67.

68

Mat. xxvi. 63.

as soon as it was day, after a very short recess, *the elders of the people, and the chief-priests and the scribes*, who made up the sanhedrim, *assembled together; and they led Jesus away from* [*the house of*] *Caiaphas* the high-priest, *to their council*, or to that magnificent chamber where their court used to sit for the dispatch of public business. *And*, producing what imperfect evidence they had, to give some colour to their proceedings, while no regard was shewn by Jesus to such false and frivolous accusations, *the high-priest stood up in the midst* of the council, *and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? What is it that these men testify against thee?* Is it true or false? *But Jesus*, knowing how vain it would be to plead for himself in so unrighteous a court, whose members came determined to condemn him, *was silent, and made no reply.*

And they said to him, Why art thou so much upon the reserve? Dost thou give up the pretensions thou hast formerly made, or dost thou still maintain them? *If thou art* indeed *the Messiah, tell us* plainly, and it will bring matters to a short issue.[e] *And he said to them, If I tell you* ever so plainly, I know that *you will not believe: And if I also ask* [*you*,] Wherefore it is that you persist in this unreasonable infidelity, *you* will only overbear me with renewed violence, and *will neither answer nor dismiss me.*

And again the high-priest answered and said to him, Think not that such evasions will suffice in an affair of such importance as this: thou knowest I have a way of coming at the certain truth, and therefore *I adjure thee* in the most solemn manner, *by* the name and authority of *the living God*, whose high-priest I am, and to whom he has committed the power of administering this oath,[f] *that thou tell us* directly, in

And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led [Jesus from Caiaphas] into their council. [John xviii. 28.—]

MARK XIV. 60. And the high-priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee? [Mat. xxvi. 62.]

61—But [Jesus] held his peace, and answered nothing. [Mat xxvi. 63.—]

LUKE XXII. 67. [And they said,] Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe.

68 And if I also ask *you*, you will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

MAT. XXVI.—63. And [again] the high-priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou

[e] *If thou art the Messiah, tell us.*] Probably these wretches hoped to gain a great advantage against Jesus either way; if he confessed it, they would condemn him on that confession; and if he denied it, they would expose him on that denial, as afraid to maintain the pretensions he had made.

[f] To whom he has committed the power of administering this oath.] That the Jewish high-priests had indeed such a power, may appear from comparing Exod. xxii. 11; Lev. v. 1; and Prov. xxix. 24; xxx. 9.

be the Christ, the Son of [the blessed] God? [Mark xiv. 6].

64 [And] Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: [I am:] nevertheless, I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right-hand [Luke, of the power of God], and coming in the clouds of heaven. [Mark xiv. 62. Luke xxii. 69.]

the plainest terms, *whether thou be the Messiah, the Son of the* ever-*blessed God*, or not? SECT. CLXXXV.

And Jesus boldly *said to him, Thou hast said* [*right*], and mentioned me by my true and proper title;[g] for *I am* indeed the Messiah, nor will I ever recede from that claim: and *moreover*, though you may now condemn me to death for asserting it, yet *I* solemnly *declare to you* all, That *hereafter* the day will come, when *ye shall see the Son of man*, who now stands in this despised and lowly form at your tribunal, exalted to all the dignity and glory which that high title imports, *sitting at the right hand of the power* and majesty *of God, and coming* with irresistible strength *in the clouds of heaven*, to take vengeance on the proudest of his enemies.[h] Mat. XXVI. 64

Luke XXII. 70. Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

And upon this, as they were willing to make sure of so important a confession, *they* pressed him with the question again, and *all said*, as in amazement, *Art thou then* really *the Son of God*, who is promised under the character of the Messiah? and wilt thou actually abide and stand by this profession, that thou art? *And he said to them*, I will never retract it; *ye say* right, and may be assured *that I am.* Luke xxii. 70

Mat. XXVI. 65. Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold,

Then the high-priest, with all the hypocritical forms of pious indignation, *rent his clothes*, as in grief for the great dishonour done to God by so false an oath,[i] and so presumptuous a claim, as he pretended this to be; *and* he *said*, *He has* now *spoken* the most direct *blasphemy*, in professing himself to be the Son of the most high God: *What further need have we of witnesses? Behold now ye have heard his* Mat. xxvi. 65

[g] *Thou hast said right.*] See note [l], Mat. xxvi. 25, sect. clxx.

[h] *Ye shall see the Son of man*, &c.] There seems a plain reference here to the view in which the Son of man is represented, Dan. vii. 13, 14, where he is said to come with the clouds of heaven to receive a dominion, &c. or to appear as God did on mount Sinai, in a chariot of clouds attended by angelic hosts. Our Lord looked very unlike that person now; but nothing could be more awful, majestic, and becoming, than such an admonition in these circumstances.—Dr. Whitby excellently proves, in his Note on Matt. xxvi. 64, that the right-hand of power is a phrase equivalent to the right-hand of God.

[i] *Rent his clothes.*] Though the priest was forbidden to rend his clothes in some cases, when others were allowed to do it, (Lev. xxi. 10,) yet in case of blasphemy, or any public calamity, it was thought allowable. (See 1 Mac. xi. 71, and Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. 15, § 2. 4.) Caiaphas therefore by this action expressed in the strongest and most artful manner, his horror at hearing so vile a wretch, as he pretended Jesus was, thus claiming the sovereignty over Israel, and a seat at the right-hand of God; and this when adjured upon oath on so solemn an occasion.

SECT. CLXXXV. Mat. XXVI.

blasphemy with your own ears. *What think ye* therefore as to the punishment he deserves? *They answered and said, He is guilty of* the most notorious of all crimes, and deserves im-
66 mediately to be put to *death;*[k] *what need have we* indeed *of any other testimony? for we ourselves have heard* [*it*] *from his own mouth. And* thus *they all condemned him as guilty of a capital crime;* and accordingly sentence was passed upon him, no witness appearing in his defence, and none daring to plead his cause;[l] though some of the council, who had a friendship for him, and particularly Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, disapproving these unrighteous proceedings, either absented themselves, or withdrew. (Compare Luke xxiii. 50, 51, and John xix. 38, sect. cxcii.)

Luke xxxii.

Then the men that attended the court, and
63 *had Jesus in custody,* finding he was condemned by the sanhedrim, *insulted him* with renewed injuries and affronts, *and* carried that insolent usage yet further than they had done before;[m] for *some* of them with rude indignity *began* even *to spit in his face, and to buffet him;*
64 *and others* scornfully abused and *beat him: And,* in derision of his title to the character he claimed, *having covered his eyes, the officers* and servants *struck him on the face with the palms*

now ye have heard his blasphemy. [Mark xiv. 63. 64.—]

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He *is* guilty of death: [Luke, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.] [And they all condemned him to be guilty of death,] [Mark xiv.—64. Luke xxii. 71.]

LUKE XXII. 63. [Then] the men that held Jesus, mocked him, [Mark, and some began to spit in his face,] [Mark, and to buffet him:] and [others] smote *him.* [Mat. xxvi. —67. Mark xiv. 65.—]

64 And when they had blind-folded him [Mark, the servants] struck him on the face [with the palms of their hands], and

[k] *They answered and said, He is guilty of death.*] A man who did not know the mighty influence of attachment to an hypothesis by frequent observation, would be astonished that any learned, accurate, and candid writer, should not be able to see the mark of a judicial process and sentence here; and yet should see them in the case of Stephen. Yet this is really the case.

[l] No witness appearing in his defence, *&c.*] Dr. Samuel Harris, in his Observations on the Old Testament (p. 102, *& seq.* quarto edit.) has, with much greater learning and ingenuity than solidity, endeavoured to prove this circumstance referred to in Isaiah's words, chap. liii. 8, Who shall declare his generation? and his first and second dissertation prefixed to his essay chiefly centre in this point.

[m] Carried that insolent usage yet further than they had done before.) Luke mentions these indignities before his being led to the council, in which he tells us he was examined on oath, as above: but Matthew and Mark mention them as immediately succeeding his being condemned, as guilty of blasphemy in the answer he made when adjured by the high priest; and do not so particularly, as Luke, distinguish what happened at his examination at the house of Caiaphas from other subsequent circumstances. The attentive reader will observe, how they are formed in our compound text into one consistent narration. I do not see it necessary to suppose, that Christ answered to two adjurations, the one some hours after the other. Matthew and Mark naturally enough relate the whole of his examination together, though carried on in two different places; and it is probable some insults preceded, and others, yet more violent, followed, his being thus solemnly condemned by the sanhedrim as *guilty of* death.

asked him, saying, Prophesy [unto us, thou Christ,] who is he that smote thee ? [Mat. xxvi.—67. 68. Mark xiv —65.]

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

of their hands, and on the head with staves: *and*, in a scoffing and contemptuous manner, *asked him, saying*, Now shew us how thou canst divine; and, if thou art indeed the true Messiah, *prophesy to us, O [thou] Christ, who is he that smote thee?* Such were the vile indignities they offered him, *and many other things they blasphemously spake against him:*[u] so that on the whole, had he been the vilest malefactor, they could not have used him worse; and common humanity, even in that case, would not have allowed of such barbarous insults.

SECT. CLXXXV. Luke XXII. 64 65

IMPROVEMENT.

THUS was the patient *Lamb of God* surrounded by his bloodthirsty enemies: Thus did the *dogs encompass him*, and the *strong bulls of Bashan beset him on every side;* (Psal. xxii. 12, 16.) Thus was he *brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth:* (Isa. liii. 7, 8.) *He was taken from judgment*, and suffered the worst kind of murder, even that which had the appearance of being legal. But those *gentle words* which he dropped in the midst of all the injuries which were offered him, are surely worthy ever to be recorded and remembered. It had always been his care to *provide things honest in the sight of all men:* and as he answered with a most graceful and courageous appeal to all that heard him, as to the innocence and usefulness of his doctrine; so it is well worthy our observation and reflection, that God so far restrained the rage and malice of hell, that no such *false witnesses* arose against him, as could on the whole asperse his character, or bring it under any brand of public infamy; though *Judas*, as well as others, might have sought a reward, or at least an indemnity, for their own villany, in accusing him. And indeed it is no inconsiderable instance of God's providential government of the world, that wicked men are restrained by this one remainder of reverence for the Divine omniscience, and dread of his vengeance, from destroying the reputations and lives of his children; especially in countries where (as in our own) the *punishment* which human laws inflict on *perjury* is so much below its desert.

Luke xxii. 63—65. Mark xiv. 60 61. John xviii. 23 Mat. xxvi. 59, 60.

When *Jesus* was examined *an oath*, he *witnessed a good confession*, and cited those that were now his *judges* to appear at *his bar*. Nor was it a vain boast! *The Son of man* is now *sitting at* 63, 64

[u] *Many other things they blasphemously spake against him.*] There is something very remarkable in this expression. They charged him with blasphemy in asserting himself to be the Son of God; but the evangelist fixes that charge on them, because he really was so.

SECT. CLXXXV. *the right hand of power*, and will ere long *come in the clouds of heaven*: and then *they* that *condemned*, and *insulted*, and *pierced him*, *shall mourn because of him*. (Rev. i. 7.) May we be now so *wise*, as *to kiss the Son* in token of our humble allegiance to him, *lest he be* then justly *angry* with us: yea, lest *we* immediately *perish from the way*, *when his wrath is but beginning to be kindled!* Psal. ii. 12.)

SECT. CLXXXVI.

Jesus is brought before Pilate: The Jews demand judgment against him, and Pilate examines him. Mat. XXVII. 1, 2. 11—14. Mark XV. 1—5. Luke XXIII. 1—4. John XVIII.—28—38.

MAT. XXVII. 1.

SECT. CLXXXVI. Mat. XXVII. 1

SUCH were the vile proceedings of this horrid and malignant night, and thus was Jesus condemned, and treated as a malefactor by the Jewish rulers. *And as soon as morning was come, all the chief-priests*, having put Jesus out of the room where the sanhedrim met, *consulted with the elders of the people, and the scribes and the whole sanhedrim*,[a] what method they should take to execute this sentence they had passed *against Jesus*, and *how* they might contrive *to put him to death* in the most severe and contemptuous manner.

MAT. XXVII. 1. [AND straightway] when the morning was come, all the chief priests [held a consultation with the] elders of the people [and scribes, and the whole council,] against Jesus, to put him to death. [Mark xv. 1.—]

2 *And* after he had been insulted by the servants at the council-chamber, *when* for the greater security *they had bound him* again,[b] *the whole multitude of them arose, and led him away* from thence *to the prætorium* (as it was properly called,) or to the judgment-hall, in which the Roman magistrate was used to sit for the dispatch of public business: for the Jews being

2 And when they had bound him. [Luke, the whole multitude of them arose, and] they led *him* away [John, unto the hall of judg-

[a] *All the chief priests consulted*, &c.] Many critics explain this of their assembling to consult together, from the house of Caiaphas, to the place where the sanhedrim used to meet: but it appears from Luke, this was the place where they had before assembled and passed sentence upon Jesus, after his first examination in the house of Caiaphas; and his account of this matter is so circumstantial, that I think it more reasonable to take these words in the order in which they are explained in the paraphrase. Compare Luke xxii. 66. page 506.

[b] *When they had bound him* again.] They bound him when he was first apprehended, but had, perhaps, loosed him while he was under examination: or else they now made his bonds stricter than before, that so they might secure him from any danger of a rescue or escape, as he passed through the streets of Jerusalem.

ment,] and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. [Mark xv.—1. Luke xxiii. 1. John xviii. —28.—]

now a conquered people, and not having the power of life and death in their hands, they could not execute Jesus without a warrant from the Romans;[c] *and* therefore, to procure their order for his death, as well as to render it the more ignominious and painful, they determined immediately to carry him to them; and to ask, not a confirmation of the sentence which they had passed upon him as a blasphemer, but a new sentence of crucifixion against him, as a seditious enemy to Cæsar's government. Accordingly, having conducted him to the prætorium, they in a solemn way *delivered him*, as a state prisoner of considerable importance, *to Pontius Pilate the* procurator or *governor*, whom Tiberius Cæsar had, some years before this, sent among them.

SECT. CLXXXVI. Mat. XXVII. 2

John XVIII.—28. And it was early, and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

And though by this time it was broad daylight, yet *it was* very *early* in the morning, *and* much sooner than the governor used to appear: he was therefore called up on this extraordinary occasion, but *they themselves went not into* the palace, of which *the judgment-hall* was a part, because it was the house of a Gentile, and they were apprehensive *lest they should be polluted, and* so *prevented from eating* those sacrifices which were offered on this first day of unleavened bread, and were looked upon as a very con-

John xviii. 28

[c] Not having the power of life and death in their hands, &c.] That the Jewish sanhedrim had a power of trying and condemning men for crimes which the Jewish law made capital, cannot I think be doubted, and has all along been taken for granted, in this work; and since the publication of the first edition, it has been abundantly confirmed by Mr. Biscoe's learned and elaborate dissertation on the subject, in his Sermons at Boyle's Lecture, chap. vi. part i. p. 123, & *seq.* But that they had at this time a power of executing such sentences without the express consent of the Roman governor, neither Mr. Maume's remarks, (Essay i. p. 18—19;) nor Mr. Biscoe's much larger argumentation, seem to me satisfactorily to prove. I still think what Dr. Lardner has written on the other side of the question unanswerable; and indeed wonder, that any can doubt of the matter after reading this story. For surely nothing but a sense of necessity could, on the whole, have brought the Jewish rulers to Pilate on this occasion; since the rendering the execution itself precarious would have balanced the argument their cruelty might find, in the contingency of its being more painful, if it should in fact be obtained. Compare John xviii. 31, p. 512. (See Dr. Lardner's Credib. part i. book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, 6. Vol. i. p. 65—106. and Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. 9. (al. 8.) sect. 1.) And indeed the Jewish writers own, that no such power was exercised by the sanhedrim for forty years before the destruction of the temple, as Dr. Lightfoot shews by several quotations from the Talmud, (Hor. Heb. on Mat. xxvi. 3, and John xviii. 31.) though he supposes it was only lost by their disuse of it, and was not taken from them by the Romans.—The chief arguments for their having such a power, (from Mat. xxvi. 65; John viii. 33; xviii. 31; Acts vii. 57, 58; xii. 2; xxii. 4, 5; xxiii. 27; xxiv. 6; xxvi. 10.) are either directly answered in the notes, or obviated in the paraphrase, on those places.

SECT. CLXXXVI.

John XVIII.

siderable part of *the passover*, of which the paschal lamb, which they had eaten the evening before, was only the beginning.

29 *Pilate therefore*, willing in this instance to oblige the heads of the nation he governed, complied so far with their religious scruples, that, leaving the prætorium, he *came out* of his house *to them;* and finding it was an affair of solemnity, he erected his tribunal in an open place adjoining to it, as the Roman magistrates often did: *and* when Jesus was presented as a prisoner before him, Pilate *said* to them, *What accusation do you bring against this man?*

29 Pilate then went out unto them and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 *They answered and said to him*, with some indecent smartness in the expression, (the consequence of a secret indignation to find themselves curbed by a superior power,) We could not but have hoped you were so well acquainted with the sanctity of our court, and the integrity of our character, as to conclude, that *if this* man *were not a notorious offender*,[d] *we would not have* brought and *delivered him to thee;* for as we would be far from any thought of punishing an innocent man, so if his crime had not been very great, we might have dealt with him ourselves without thy concurrence.

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 *Then Pilate said to them, Take ye him* back to your own court again, *and judge him according to your law;* for I am by no means desirous of interfering with you in the regular exercise of your judicial power. And this he said with a view of shifting off from himself an affair to which in the general he could be no stranger;[e]

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law.—

[d] *A notorious offender.*] So I render κακοποιος; in this connection, because they had still the power of inflicting slighter punishments; so that their bringing him to Pilate was a proof that they judged him to have incurred a capital sentence. The word *malefactor* has much the same sense in our ordinary speech

[e] With a view of shifting off from himself, &c.] Pilate could not be entirely ignorant of the case before him; for he began his government at Jerusalem before Jesus entered on his public ministry; and, besides many other extraordinary things which he must formerly have heard concerning him he had, no doubt, been informed at large of his public entrance into Jerusalem, the beginning of the week; and also of his apprehension, in which the Jewish rulers were assisted by a Roman cohort, which could hardly be engaged in that service without the governor's express permission. It plainly appears by his whole conduct, how unwilling he was to engage in this cause; he seems therefore cautious, not to enter into the full sense of what the Jewish rulers intended, when they called him a malefactor; and answers them in ambiguous language, which they might have interpreted as a warrant to execute Christ, if they found it necessary, and yet, which

and which he easily saw would be attended with many perplexing circumstances. SECT. CLXXXVI.

—The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.

Then the Jews said to him again, You well know that *it is not* now *lawful for us to put any man to death* without your concurrence; (compare Mat. xxvii. 2, p. 510.) but it is a capital crime, of which the prisoner here before you is convicted, and as, after a fair trial, he has received such a sentence in the sanhedrim, we only wait your warrant to proceed to execution. John XVIII. 31

LUKE XXIII. 2. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king.

And, as Pilate could not but inquire of what crime he had been convicted, they resolved to mention that charge which might render him most obnoxious to the Roman power, and to represent the matter in its most malignant view; and accordingly *they began* with great violence *to accuse him, saying,* It is not merely on a religious account that we have brought him before you, but *we have* also *found this* seditious [*fellow*] *perverting the* whole Jewish *nation,* from one end of the country to the other, *and* in effect *forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar,* by *saying, that he himself is Messiah, a King,* whom many of the Jews have expected to rescue them from all subjection to a foreign power; and this claim he has had the assurance to avow in open court; so that it is but a necessary piece of repect to thee, and to the emperor, whose lieutenant thou art, to bring him hither to be condemned, and indeed to leave him to be executed by you. Luke xxiii. 2.

JOHN XVIII. 32. That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

And though they aimed at nothing more by this, than to make sure of their murderous designs, and to add new circumstances of shame and agony to the execution, yet Providence was pleased to over-rule it with a wise intent, *that the saying of Jesus might* thus *be fulfilled, which he spake* more than once, (see John iii. 14; xii. 32, 33; and Mat. xx. 19.) *signifying* or implying *by what* kind of *death he should die,* even by being lifted up from the earth, or by crucifixion, which was a Roman punishment; whereas according to the Jewish law, (Lev. xxiv. 16.) he would have been stoned, (as his servant Stephen afterwards John xviii. 32.

would have left them liable to be questioned for doing it, and might have given him some advantage against them; which a man of his character might have wished. Their reply shews they were more aware of this artifice, than commentators have generally been.

SECT. LXXXVI.

was,) having been impiously adjudged by them to have deserved death as a blasphemer. (Compare Mat. xxvi. 65, 66, and Mark xiv. 64, p. 507, 508.)

Mat. xxvii. 12 *And when he was* thus *accused by the chief-priests and elders,*[f] who aggravated the matter by the addition *of many* other *things*, either entirely false, or grossly misrepresented; reproaching him as a blasphemer, a sabbath-breaker, and a magician; and, in a word, omitting nothing which they thought might blacken his character, *he made* them *no answer* at all.

Mar. XXVII. 12. And when he was accused of the chief-priests and elders [of many things,] he answered nothing. [Mark xv. 3.]

13 *Then Pilate said to him, Dost thou answer nothing* to all this? *Hearest thou not* the several charges they produce against thee, or hast thou no concern to vindicate thyself from what they have alledged? *Behold*, and consider, *how many* and how great *things they witness against thee.*

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, [Answerest thou nothing?] Hearest thou not? [Behold] how many things they witness against thee. [Mark xv. 4.]

14 *But still*, as *Jesus* knew how little all his apologies would signify, he continued silent, and *did not answer him to any one word; so that Pilate the governor was greatly astonished*, and knew not how to account for so uncommon a behaviour.

14 And [Jesus yet] answered him to never a word, insomuch that [Pilate] the governor marvelled greatly. [Mark xv. 5.]

John xviii. But yet, as the governor had heard an honourable report of Jesus, and observed in this

John XVIII. 33. Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus: [and Jesus stood before the governor,] [Luke, and Pilate asked him, saying,] Art thou the king of the Jews? [Mat. xxvii. 11.—Mark xv. 2.—Luke xxiii. 3.—]

33 silence an air of meek majesty and greatness of spirit, rather than any consciousness of guilt or any indication of a fierce contempt, he was willing to discourse with him more privately before he proceeded farther. *Pilate therefore entered again into the prætorium*, which he had quitted to oblige the Jews, (ver. 29, p. 512.) *and called Jesus* in: *and* [*as*] *Jesus stood before the governor* there, *Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou* indeed *the king of the Jews*, and dost thou really pretend to any right to govern them?

34 *Jesus answered him, Dost thou say this of thyself*, from the knowledge of any seditious practices which thou hast ever observed in me? *or* is it only what thou hast gathered from the present clamour made against me, and *have others told it thee concerning me?*

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

[f] *And when he was* thus *accused*, &c.] The reader may perhaps observe, that I have transposed Mat. xxvii. 11, and Mark xv. 2. But it is only because I think the other evangelists relate the story in such an order, as to shew the propriety of this little transposition.

SECT. CLXXXVI. John XVIII.

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief-priests, have delivered thee unto me: What hast thou done?

Pilate immediately *replied, Am I a Jew?* or do I know any thing of your peculiarities, further than I am informed by others? I do not at all pretend to it: but thou knowest that *thine own nation, and* those who are esteemed the most sacred persons in it, even *the chief-priests* themselves, *have delivered thee to me* as a malefactor, and have charged thee, among other crimes, with treason against Cæsar, in setting up for king of the country: tell me therefore freely *what hast thou done* to deserve such a charge? for the more frank thou art in thine acknowledgment, the greater favour mayest thou expect. 35

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Jesus answered him, *My kingdom is not of this world,* nor is it my business or design to erect a temporal dominion, and to establish any claim which should at all interfere with that of Cæsar, or of which any prince has reason to be jealous. Indeed if I would have entertained such views, I might have found support and encouragement from the very persons who are now my accusers: and *if* I had asserted that *my kingdom was of this world,* and had favoured such methods of defence, *my servants,* who professed of late so great and so public a regard to me, *would* resolutely *have fought, that I might not have been delivered to the Jews,*[s] or would attempt even now to rescue me out of their hands: *but now my kingdom is not from hence,* not to be erected here; and therefore I have been so far from arming my followers with secular weapons, that the guard who came to apprehend me know I forbade their making use of those they had. 36

[s] *My servants would have fought,* &c.] Though our translation of ηγωνιζοντο may be more literal, yet, considering that our Lord was now actually in the hands of his enemies, I think it plain, that it is to be taken in such an extent. It may be objected, that the number of Christ's disciples, had all the five hundred been assembled in arms, could have been no match for the Jewish and Roman power at Jerusalem. But it is to be remembered, that (as Dr. Lardner with his usual good sense observes,) the populace appeared zealously on Christ's side but a few days before; and the reason of their turning against him was, his not assuming a temporal kingdom, as they certainly expected he would have done. (See Lardn. Credib. part i. book i. chap. 5. Vol. I. p. 301.) And we may farther add, that a very small body of forces, under a leader endowed with such miraculous power as Jesus lately exercised, might have been sufficient to vanquish all the Roman legions. Compare note [i] on John vi. 14. Vol. I. p. 436.

SECT. CLXXXVI. John XVIII.

Pilate therefore said to him, Thou speakest however of thy kingdom and thy subjects: *art thou then* really *a king?*

37 *And Jesus answered him and said,* therein courageously witnessing a good confession, (1 Tim. vi. 13.) *Thou sayest* [*right;*] *I am* indeed, as thou hast said, *a King;* the king of the Jews, and the appointed Head and Governor of the whole Israel of God; nor will I ever basely seek my safety by renouncing my divine claim to the most excellent majesty and extensive dominion: nay, *for this purpose was I born, and for this end I came into the world* from another and much better abode, *that I might bear witness to the* cause of *truth* in general; and in particular to this great and fundamental branch of it: and I have given such ample proof of this, that *every* honest and well-disposed *person, who is* indeed a friend *of the truth, heareth my voice,* and pays an entire deference to my instructions.[h]

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?—

—[And] Jesus answered, [Luke, him, and said,] Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. [Mat. xxvii. —11. Mark xv.—2. Luke xxiii.—3.]

38 *Pilate says to him, What is* the *truth* which thou referrest to, and speakest of as thy business to attest? *And when he had said this,* as Jesus made a pause, and did not immediately make him any answer, his hurry would not allow him to wait for it: so *he went out again to the Jews, and said to the chief priests, and the people* assembled with them abroad, I have examined the prisoner you brought me in private; and I must freely declare that *I find no fault at all in this man,* nor can I perceive that he is any enemy either to the rights of Cæsar, or the tranquillity and happiness of the Jews; and therefore do not see how I can with any justice condemn him to die. But his accusers refused to acquiesce in this, and advanced a more circumstantial charge against him, which gave occasion to that examination before Herod, which will be related in the next section.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith [to the chief priests, and to the people,] I find no fault at all [in this man.] [Luke xxiii. 4.]

[h] *Every person who is* a friend *of the truth heareth my voice.*] What our Lord here says incidentally, is to be regarded as an universal maxim; *all sincere lovers of the truth will hear him:* and accordingly St. John, with all simplicity, depending on the evidences which he, and his brethren, had given of their mission from Christ, lays down the same test. 1 John iv. 6, *We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us.*

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CLXXXVI.

How much exactness in the ceremonials of religion may be found in those, who have even the most outrageous contempt for its vital principles and essential duties! Yea, how much of that exactness may be made subservient to the most mischievous and diabolical purposes! These wolves in sheep's clothing would not enter into the house of a heathen, lest they should be polluted, and become unfit to eat the passover; yet they contrive and urge an impious murder, which that very heathen, though he had much less evidence of Christ's innocence than they, could not be brought to permit without strong reluctance, and a solemn, though vain, transferring of the guilt from himself to them. John xviii. 28.

Justly might our Lord say in the words of David, *They laid to my charge things which I knew not;* (Psal. xxxv. 11.) But what can defend the most innocent and excellent against malicious slanders and defamations! Or who can expect, or even wish, wholly to escape, when such accusations are brought against Christ, even by the rulers of his nation, who should have been men of distinguished generosity and honour! But instead of this, they were all an assembly of murderers, and lay in wait for their prey, like so many devouring lions. Luke xxiii. 2. Mat. xxvii. 12.

Pilate would renew the examination of the cause; and so far he acted a cautious and an honourable part. Yet, alas, how many that set out on such maxims, want courage and resolution to pursue them! But the courage of Christ never failed. He *witnessed before Pontius Pilate* the *good confession* we have now been reading; (1 Tim. vi. 13.) and owned himself *a King*, though at the same time he declared, (what it were to be wished, all his followers had duly regarded,) that *his kingdom is not of this world.* Greatly do we debase it, if we imagine it is; and most unworthy is it of those that call themselves the ministers of his kingdom, to act as if they thought it was. Yet such is the wickedness of some, and such the blindness of others, in the Roman church, that, though, of all the churches in the world it is manifestly the most secular kingdom,[1] it arrogates to itself the name, not only of a part, but of the whole, of Christ's kingdom here below. John xviii. 29—32. 37 36

Christ came to bear witness to the truth; and a careful attendance to his testimony will be the best proof we can give that we love *the truth*, and the best method we can take to make ourselves acquainted with it. And of so great importance is *the truth*, that it surely deserves the attentive inquiry and the zealous patronage of the greatest and the busiest of mankind. Let 37

[1] It is manifestly the most secular kingdom.] This Mr. Boyse of Dublin has finely illustrated in his most ingenious discourse on these words.

SECT. CLXXXVI. Ver. 38. us not therefore, when we begin to ask what it is, like Pilate, hurry on to some other care before we can receive a satisfactory answer; but joyfully open our minds to the first dawnings of that celestial day, till it shine more and more, to irradiate and adorn all our souls. On the whole, imperfect as the character of this unhappy governor was, let us learn from him candidly to confess the truth, so far as we have discovered it; let us learn, more steadily than he, to vindicate the innocent and worthy, and on no terms permit ourselves, in any degree, to do harm to those in whom, on a strict and impartial inquiry, we can find no fault.

Luke xxiii. 4.

SECT. CLXXXVII.

Pilate sends Jesus to Herod, who, having treated him with great contempt, sends him back again. Pilate in vain endeavours to persuade the Jews to consent to his release, who impiously prefer Barabbas, and persist in their demands of a sentence of crucifixion against Jesus. Mat. XXVII. 15—18. 20—23. Mark XV. 6—14. Luke XXIII. 5—23. John XVIII. 39, *to the end.*

LUKE XXIII. 5.

SECT. CLXXXVII. Luke XXIII. 5 IT was observed in the preceding section, that when Pilate came out of the palace he bore an open testimony to the innocence of Jesus, and declared to the priests, in the presence of the people, that "he found no fault at all in him:" *but they* not only continued strongly to urge their accusation, but *were more violent* than before, *saying*, We assuredly know that *he stirs up* all *the people, teaching* the most dangerous and seditious doctrines *throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee*, that factious country, where he has been most busy, and from thence making a progress, *even to this place*, and gathering up followers every where by the way, to the apparent danger and damage of the state.

LUKE XXIII. 5. AND they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 *And when Pilate heard* them speak *of Galilee*, *he* presently *inquired if the man* whom they had 7 brought before him *was a Galilean. And finding that he was of* that country, and therefore that he properly belonged to *Herod's jurisdiction*, who was tetrarch of Galilee, *he* willingly embraced this opportunity to clear himself of so perplexing an affair, and immediately

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean. 7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent

him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

SECT. CLXXXVII

Luke XXIII. 8.

sent him away *to Herod*[a] *who* being *himself* a Jew, *was also at Jerusalem in those days*, having come up to celebrate the passover there.

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

And when Herod saw Jesus he rejoiced exceedingly; for he had a long time been very *desirous to see him, because he had heard much concerning him* in Galilee, (compare Luke ix. 7, 9; sect. lxxvii.) *and he* now *hoped* that he should have an opportunity so far to satisfy his curiosity, as *to see some miracle done by him*, and might be able also to determine, whether he was as he had once suspected, John the Baptist risen from the dead. (Compare Mat. xiv. 2, Vol. I. p. 423.)

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

And he examined him in many words, concerning a variety of particulars, both as to his pretensions, and the proof of his mission, as well as the tenor of his doctrine: *but* as Jesus knew this was not a proper time and circumstance to enter into those questions, of which Herod might long ago have been sufficiently informed, *he made him no answer.*

10 And the chief-priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

And the chief-priests and scribes, whose malice had prompted them to attend him thither, *stood* in the presence of the king, *eagerly accusing him* of the same crimes which they had before charged him with, in their application to Pilate.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and

And Herod, with those of *his soldiers* who now attended him as his life-guard, looked upon Jesus with disdain, and *treated him in a* very *contemptuous manner*, like a poor inconsiderable creature, who no way answered the account they had heard of him, neither saying nor doing any thing to gratify their curiosity; *and having derided* [*him*] for pretending to be a king, (as it was urged by his accusers he had done,) in public contempt of that claim, what-

[a] *He sent him to Herod.*] It may not be improper, for the sake of those who are less acquainted with the Jewish history, to observe, that this was Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, by whom John the Baptist had been beheaded, and whom Christ had justly represented as a fox. (Luke xiii. 32. p. 137.) He was son to Herod the Great, under whom Christ was born; and uncle to Herod Agrippa, (by whom James was beheaded, and Peter imprisoned,) who was *eaten by worms;* (Acts xii. 2, 3, 23.) and great uncle to that Agrippa who was by Paul's discourse *almost persuaded to become a Christian.* (Acts xxvi. 28.)—Christ's arraignment before him, when he was sent back uncondemned, was a great additional proof of the falsehood of those accusations which the Jews had brought against him as a seditious person, and particularly as one who had stirred up the people in Galilee.

SECT. CLXXXVII. Luke XXIII.

ever it was, Herod *clothed him with a splendid robe,*[b] *and sent him back to Pilate;* thereby intimating, that he left him to do what he pleased with his prisoner, but that for his own part he apprehended his pretensions to royalty worthy of derision, rather than serious resentment.

arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

12 *And,* whatever Pilate's real intentions were, the compliment of sending Jesus to be examined by him, was so well taken by Herod; and Herod's sending him back to the Roman governor was, on the other hand, such a public instance of regard to him; that *the same day Pilate and Herod became friends,* and were reconciled *to each other: for before* this, *they were at enmity between themselves.*[c]

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 *And Pilate, having* received an account of what had passed before Herod, *called together the chief-priests, and the rulers, and* with them the rest of *the people* who had appeared against 14 him as his accusers, And *said to them, You have brought me this man,* Jesus of Nazareth, *as one that has perverted the people,* and taught doctrines injurious to your religion, and also to the civil peace and the Roman government; *and behold I have examined* [*him*] both *in your presence,* and in private, *and* heard all that could be alledged against him; but I must solemnly declare, that I *have found no crime in this man as to the things that you have charged him with;* nor can I in my conscience think, that you have made good any of the accusations you 15 have brought against him: *Nor yet has Herod* been able to make any such discovery;

13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief-priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him.

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him, and lo,

[b] *A splendid robe.*] This expression Εσθητα λαμπραν does not so properly signify (as Le Clerc renders it) *a white robe;* nor was it, as he supposes, intended as a declaration of his innocence. It was rather some gorgeous garment which belonged to Herod or some of his officers, and was, perhaps, grown old, and they clothed him with it in derision of his having pretended to be a king. This usage was exceedingly insolent: perhaps the remorse of conscience which Herod had felt on account of the murder of John the Baptist, might render him cautious how he joined in any attempt on the life of Jesus, which we do not find that he did.

[c] *They were at enmity between themselves.*] The cause of this enmity can only be conjectured: perhaps it might be the slaughter which Pilate had made of some of the Galileans who had come up to sacrifice at Jerusalem. (See Luke xiii. 1, sect. cxvi.) But Mons. Saurin truly observes, that, considering on the one hand the jealousy of the Jews, where any foreign power was concerned, and on the other the oppressive measures generally taken by those who are invested with commissions like this which Pilate bore over conquered countries, and especially the accounts we have of his own bad character and conduct, their reconciliation is much more wonderful than their enmity. See Saur. Serm. Vol. X. p. 246, 247.

nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

for I sent you to him with the prisoner, that you might do your utmost to convict him before that prince, who being a person of your own religion, and well acquainted with your laws and customs, might have known more of the matter than myself; *and* yet *behold,* it appears to have been Herod's judgment, that *nothing worthy of death has been done by him,*[d] for, instead of sending him back like one who deserves a capital sentence, he has treated him like an idiot rather than a traitor, so as plainly to shew that he thinks him merely the object of ridicule, or to deserve at most but some slight punishment. And *therefore, when I have chastised him* by scourging, which will be an admonition to him for the future not to use those wild enthusiastical expressions which have given so much umbrage and suspicion, *I will let* [*him*] *go:* and I believe you may depend upon it that he will give us no farther trouble; nor would he have interest enough to do it, if he were inclined to the attempt.

SECT. CLXXXVII.

Luke XXIII. 15.

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him.*

16

MARK XV. 6. Now at that feast [the governor was wont] [Luke, *and* of necessity he must] [release unto the people] one prisoner, whomsoever they desired. [Mat. xxvii. 15. Luke xxiii. 17.]

Now it was usual at the feast of the passover, [*and*] even was grown by custom in a manner *necessary,*[e] *for the* Roman *governor,* when such multitudes were assembled from all parts, *to release to the people* any *one prisoner, whom they desired* to be set at liberty, whatever crime it was that he was charged with. *And there was then* in Pilate's custody, *a* very infamous and *noted prisoner, whose name was Barabbas, that lay bound with some* other ruffians *who had made an insurrection in the city* in conjunction *with him,* and *who had* also *committed murder in the insurrection; and,* besides the part he had acted in this seditious riot, *he was* a fellow of a most abandoned character, and known to be *a robber,*

Mark xv. 6.

7 And there was [then a notable prisoner] named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him [Luke, in the city], who had committed murder in the insurrection [John, *and* was a robber.] [Mat. xxvii. 16. Luke xxiii. 19. John xviii.—40.]

7

[d] *Nothing worthy of death has been done by him.*) The phrase πεπραγμενον αυτω must here have this signification, as the margin of our Bible renders it; for though this is something of an unusual construction, yet as Raphelius, (Annotat. ex Polyb. p. 259.) has produced many instances of the like nature, it would be much harsher to suppose that a capital sentence, or any treatment from Herod which should intimate he thought Jesus deserved it, should be called αξιον θανατου, *something worthy of death.*

[e] *Usual,—and* in a manner *necessary.*] There was no law to oblige him to this; but as acts of grace are generally popular things, this seems to have been first freely used by the Romans to please their tributaries, and now by custom was in a manner established. I find no substantial reason to believe there was in the original of this custom any reference to the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian bondage at this time.

SECT. clxxxvii

who had infested the highways with his villainy; so that it was generally concluded he would receive sentence of death, and would be executed that day. *And*, as the power of reversing or executing such sentences then lay in the Romans, *the people therefore, when they were gathered together* about the tribunal, *began with* a great noise and *clamour to demand* of Pilate [*that he would do*] at this passover *as he had always done to them* upon the like occasions, and would discharge a prisoner.

Mark XV. 8.

8 And the multitude [therefore when they were gathered together,] crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them. [Mat. xxvii. 17.—]

9 *And Pilate* hoping that he might preserve the life of Jesus, whose innocence he so clearly saw, determined to attempt it by this method; and accordingly, that he might induce them to choose him, he proposed no other alternative than that scandalous and outrageous criminal whom we have just now mentioned, and *answered them, saying, You have* indeed *a custom, that I should release to you one at the passover*, and I am ready now to oblige you in this affair: *whom will you therefore* choose *that I release unto you; Barabbas*, that seditious and murderous robber? *or* this *Jesus, who is called Christ*, who in I know not what strange sense is pretended to be *the king of the Jews*, and whom you see before you in the fine robe in which Herod

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, [John, Ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover:] [Whom] *will* ye [John, therefore] that I release unto you? [Barabbas? or Jesus, which is called Christ,] the king of the Jews? [Mat. xxvii.—17. John xviii. 39.]

10 has thought fit to array him? *For he knew that the chief-priests* and rulers *had* not *delivered him up* into his hands from a regard to justice, but merely *out of envy* at his popularity; and therefore he was willing to make the proposal to the people in such a form as might be most likely to secure his life.

10 (For he knew that the chief-priests had delivered him for envy.) [Mat. xxvii. 18.]

11 *But the chief-priests and elders*, who were exceedingly solicitous to obtain their end, lest this artifice of the governor should defeat all their laboured scheme, *excited* the most forward of the people, [*and*] effectually *persuaded the mob* they had brought with them, *that they should ask* the governor, with a continual noise and clamour, *that he would rather release Barabbas to them*; that by this means the point they had in view might be secured, *and they might* be sure to *destroy Jesus*. *And* therefore when *the governor answered* them in this manner, *and said to them* again, Take notice that your choice lies only between these, and therefore now de-

11 But the chief-priests [and elders] moved [*and* persuaded] the people, that they should ask that he should rather release Barabbas unto them, [and destroy Jesus.] [Mat. xxvii. 20.]

Mat. xxvii. 21.

MAT. XXVII 21. —The governor answered and said unto

them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?

LUKE XXIII. 18. And [John, then] they [John, all] cried out [John, again] all at once, saying, [John, Not this man but Barabbas:] Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas. [Mat. xxvii. —21. John xviii. 40.—]

MARK XV. 12. And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do [with Jesus, which is called Christ,] whom ye call the king of the Jews? [Mat. xxvii. 22.]

13 And they [all] cried out again, [*and* say unto him,] Crucify him: [Let him be crucified.] [Mat. xxvii.—22.

LUKE XXIII. 20. Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And [MARK, Pilate] said unto them the third time, Why? what evil hath he done? I have

termine for yourselves, *which of the two do you desire I should release unto you?* *Then*, as their principles had prompted them, *they all cried out again with one consent*, in the same noisy and tumultuous way as before, *saying*, We will *not* have *this* [*man*], *but Barabbas; away with this* [*man*], *and release unto us Barabbas.* And thus, when Pilate would have let him go, they denied the holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them. (Acts iii. 14.)

SECT. CLXXXVII. Luke XXIII. 18.

And Pilate, to divert them from the purpose they were so unreasonably set upon, *again answered and said to them, What therefore would you have me do with* this *Jesus, who is called Christ*, and *whom*, if I may believe your own rulers, so many of *you* are ready to *call* and own as *the King of the Jews?*[t] *And they all* presently renewed their clamour, and *cried out again*, as before, [*and*] with one voice *said to him, Crucify him: let him* immediately *be crucified;* for he is fit to be treated as the vilest slave, rather than to be called our king.[s] Mark xv. 12. 13

Pilate therefore, being still *desirous to release Jesus, spake to them* yet *again;* urging them seriously to consider what they did, in thus preferring such an abandoned miscreant as Barabbas to so innocent a person. Luke xxiii. 20. *But they*, without so much as offering any farther reason, persisted in their importunity, and *cried* out as before, *saying, Crucify* [*him*], *crucify him.* 21

And Pilate was so intent on delivering him, that he *said to them the third time, Why* will you be so cruel as to insist upon it? *what evil* 22

[t] *Whom you call the king of the Jews.*] Pilate often repeats this title; and it may seem strange that he should use it so frequently. Probably he might do it partly to ridicule those pretences, and bring contempt on the scheme of a Messiah; and partly to procure from the Jews, in their zeal against Jesus, the strongest and most public professions of their subjection to Cæsar.

[s] *Let him be crucified.*] By this cry they declared the greatest degree of rage that can be imagined; for it was as if they had said, "Let him whom you call our "king be treated like one of the vilest "of your slaves, who has committed "the most enormous crime." To have inflicted such a punishment as this on any free Jew, would probably have been sufficient to have thrown the whole city and nation into an uproar; but now they were deaf to every thing but the clamour of passion, and in their madness forgot with how dangerous a precedent they might furnish the Roman governor. And indeed it turned dreadfully on themselves, when such vast numbers of them were crucified for their opposition to the Romans, during the time of their last war. See note [o] in the next section, on Mat. xxvii. 25.

SECT. clxxxvii. Luke XXIII.

has he done? [h] I declare to you all, as I told you but now, (ver. 14, p. 520.) that *I have found no capital crime in him: I will therefore,* as I said, (ver. 16,) *chastise him* by scourging,
22 and then I hope your rage will be moderated, *and* you will be prevailed upon to agree that I should *let* [*him*] *go* without any farther punishment.

found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go. [Mat. xxvii. 23—Mark xv. 14.—]

23 *But they,* without pretending to answer the argument he had alledged, overbore it by a wild fury, and *were urgent* in pressing him *with loud* and importunate *voices; and* the more he opposed them, they *cried out the more abundantly* and violently, *demanding that,* whatever was the consequence of it, *he might be crucified: and,* on the whole, notwithstanding the farther remonstrance of Pilate on the admonition of his wife, (which will be mentioned in the next section,) *their voices, and* [*those*] *of the chief-priests* (who, to encourage the cry, had so little sense of common decency, as themselves to join in it,) *prevailed* with the governor, though contrary to the convictions of his own conscience, to comply with their request.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, [Mark, and cried out the more exceedingly,] requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them, and of the chief-priests, prevailed. [Mat. xxvii. 23. Mark xv.—14.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxiii. 7—10

BEHOLD, how all imaginable circumstances seem to conspire, to increase the *infamy* thrown on that *sacred head,* which now most worthily wears a crown of eternal glory; *Of a truth,* O Lord, *against the holy Child Jesus, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles* and the chief-priests, *and the people of Israel, were gathered together, to do whatsoever thy hand and thy coun-*
11 *sel had determined before to be done;* (Acts iv. 27, 28.) The wisest person on earth was by *Herod and his soldiers derided* as a fool; the most deserving was *condemned* by the *chief-priests;* and the most innocent was treated as a criminal by *Pilate,* and furiously demanded as a public victim by the *Jews.* All the proofs of his innocence are overborne by a *loud* and a senseless *cry;* and those *hosannahs* with which the streets and temple
11—23 were so lately echoing, are exchanged into *Crucify him, crucify him.* So uncertain is human applause, and so unrighteous may human judgments be!

But in the midst of all, the blessed *Jesus* stands collected in

[h] *Why? what evil has he done?*] Τι γαρ κακον εποιησεν; Raphelius, (Annot. ex Xenoph. p. 64,) has well proved, that γαρ is often used by the correctest Greek writers, and particularly Xenophon, as an elegant expletive, especially to introduce a question.

himself. Firm as a rock, he bears the violence of the storm, and is not moved by all the furious waves that beat upon him; and when he saw *a robber*, and *a murderer* preferred before him, and *a sentence* of the most cruel *death* clamorously called for and demanded against him, he silently *commits himself to him that judgeth righteously*, who ere long *brought forth* his *righteousness as brightness, and* his *salvation as a lamp that burneth.* (Compare 1 Pet. ii. 23; and Isa. lxii. 1.) SECT. CLXXXVII. Ver. 18, 19 Mark xv. 13, 14

Lord, if thou callest us out to share in thy sufferings, may *the Spirit of God and of glory* thus *rest on us!* And may neither the scorn nor the rage of our enemies separate us from thee, who did so courageously bear all this for us; nor may they ever sink us into any weakness of behaviour unworthy of those who have the honour to call themselves *thy followers!*

SECT. CLXXXVIII.

Pilate having again and again renewed his efforts to persuade the Jews to consent that Jesus should be released, at length yields to their importunity, and delivers him up to be crucified. Mat. XXVII. 19. 24—31. Mark XV. 15—20. Luke XXIII. 24, 25. John XIX. 1—16.

JOHN XIX. 1.

JOHN XIX 1. THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him.*

THEN as the priests and people of the Jews continued their clamorous demand that Jesus should be crucified, *Pilate* thought it most advisable to seem at least to consent to it, and *therefore took Jesus and scourged him;* hoping that, after he had been severely scourged, the rage of the populace would be something abated, and they might at last be prevailed upon to consent that he should be dismissed. SECT. CLXXXVIII. John XIX. 1

MAT. XXVII. 27. Then the soldiers of the governor took

Then the soldiers of the governor,[a] knowing that it was the Roman custom to scourge pri- Mat. xxvii. 27

[a] *Then the soldiers,* &c.] The evangelist John so plainly speaks of their *crowning our Lord with thorns*, and these other indignities, as previous to Pilate's last attempt to save him, that I think it proper to transpose those verses in Matthew and Mark, which mention these circumstances as after his condemnation, and immediately preceding the execution. Some of them might probably be repeated after Pilate had delivered him to be crucified, while the instruments of death were preparing: and therefore Matthew and Mark mention the whole series of those cruelties together: or the word τοτε, *then*, (which is used by Matthew,) may only signify, that it was done *about that time*, not determining the order of each particular so absolutely as to be inconsistent with the most accurate and distinct account which John gives of the whole process of this affair. Many instances of the indeterminate use of that particle occur in the evangelists: See Mat. ix. 14; xxiv. 40; Mark xiii. 14, 26; Luke xxi. 10, 21; and John xix. 16.

SECT. clxxxviii. Mat. XXVII.

soners just before they put them to death, interpreted Pilate's order on this head, as a declaration that he was immediately to be crucified: and therefore they *took Jesus* [*and*] *led him away*
27 *into the common-hall* in Pilate's palace, which was *called the prætorium*, (as being the place where the prætor, a Roman magistrate, used to keep his court;) *and* there they *gathered to him the whole band*, or cohort, to insult and torment him, not being concerned to keep any measures with a person whom they looked upon as en-
28 tirely abandoned to their will. *And having stripped him* of that splendid garment in which Herod had contemptuously dressed him, in order to vary the mockery and affront, *they* wantonly *clothed him in* a vest of imperial *purple*, [*and*] *put on him a scarlet robe* over it, that in this gaudy dress he might have something of a mock
29 resemblance to a prince: *And*, farther to ridicule his pretensions to royalty, which they considered as an affront to their nation and emperor, *the soldiers having* maliciously *plaited a crown of thorns, put it upon his head,*[b] *and* put *a* large *reed*, or cane, *into his right hand*, to represent a sceptre: *and* then *they began* in a ludicrous manner *to pay their* homage and *salutations to him*, as to a new-created prince on his coronation-day; [*and*] *bowing the knee before him, they did him reverence* in a scoffing way, *and mocked him, saying*, All *hail*, thou most magnificent *king of the Jews!* Hail mighty monarch! we give thee joy on thine accession to the crown! *and* then approaching him as if they would have offered him some present, as is usual on such
30 occasions, *they smote him with their hands; And* proceeded so far as to *spit upon him*, even in his very face; *and* at last *took the reed*, or cane, out of his hand,[c] *and* barbarously *struck him* with

Jesus *and* [led him away] into the common-hall [called prætorium,] and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*. [Mark xv. 16.]

28 And they stripped him, and [clothed him with purple, *and*] put on him a scarlet robe: [Mark xv. 17.—John xix.—2.]

29 And when [John, the soldiers] had plaited a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they [began to salute him, *and*,] bowed the knee before him, [*and* worshipped him,] and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews: [John, and they smote him with their hands:] [Mark xv. — 17, 18 — 19, John xix. 2—3.]

30 And they [did] spit upon him, and took the reed, and

[b] *Having plaited a crown of thorns*, &c.] It is certain, they intended hereby to expose his pretended royalty to ridicule and contempt: but had that been all, a crown of straws might have served as well. They undoubtedly meant to add cruelty to their scorn, which especially appeared in their striking him on the head when this crown was put on.—If the best descriptions of the eastern thorns are to be credited, they are much larger than any commonly known in these parts.

[c] *Took the reed*, or cane, out of his hand.] The word καλαμος does indeed sometimes signify *a slender reed*; (Mat. xi. 7; xii. 20; and 3 John, ver. 13.) but it includes all kinds of canes; and it is most probable this was a walking-staff,

smote him on the head. [Mark xv. 19.—]

it *on the head*; and so, as it were, nailed down the thorns into his forehead and temples, and occasioned thereby exquisite pain, as well as great effusion of blood: all which this holy Sufferer bore with the utmost meekness and composure, neither reviling nor threatening them, but silently committing himself to the righteous invisible Judge. (1 Pet. ii. 23.) SECT. clxxxviii. Mat. xxvii. 30

MAT. XXVII. 19. When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

In the mean time, Pilate was taken up with trying and condemning some other prisoners who were to be executed that day; *and while he* thus *was sitting on the tribunal* he had erected, *his wife*, having by this time been informed that Jesus had been brought before him, and was going to be given up to death, *sent* a very importunate message *to him*,[d] *saying*, I beseech thee see to it, that thou *have nothing to do with* the blood of *that righteous One*, against whom the Jews are now demanding judgment; *for I have suffered many things to-day on his account in a dream*,[e] and have had such terrible views represented to my imagination in my sleep this very morning, that I cannot but look upon it as something Divine; and conclude that if thou doest upon any terms consent to his death, it will be attended with dreadful consequences to thyself and thy family. Mat. xxvii. 19

JOHN XIX. 4. Pilate therefore went

Pilate therefore, alarmed by such a message as this, went into the common-hall himself to see what they were doing with the prisoner; and when he beheld with strong emotion all those John xix. 4.

which they put into his hand as a sceptre, for a blow with a slight reed would scarce have been felt, or have deserved a mention in a detail of such dreadful sufferings.

[d] *His wife sent to him.*] While Rome was governed by a commonwealth, it was unusual for the governors of provinces to take their wives with them; but afterwards it grew customary, and the motion made against it in the fourth year of Tiberius was rejected with some indignation. See Tacit. Annal. lib. iii, cap. 33. 44.

[e] *I have suffered many things to-day on his account in a dream.*] Perhaps the word σημερον, *to-day*, may imply, that she had dreamt these things that morning, since Pilate rose; and as the Heathens imagined those dreams most significant which came about break of day, she might, on that account lay the greater stress upon them. Jansenius thinks she had now a representation of those calamities which afterwards befel Pilate and his family. (See note [s] in the improvement.) But it is an unaccountable thought of Mr. Fleming, that the devil might be the author of this dream, by which he might endeavour to prevent the death of Christ according to the prophecies. His two arguments, from her calling Christ a man, (which is merely taken from our version, for in the original it is only τω δικαιω εκεινω, *that righteous One*,) and from the disquiet which this dream gave her, are too inconsiderable to need a particular reply. See Flem. Christol. Vol. II. p. 395.

SECT. clxxxviii. John XIX. 4

indignities and torments which Jesus had borne, and saw how severely the soldiers had scourged him, thinking that the sight of him in so bad a condition might move the Jews to compassion, he determined to make one trial more. And accordingly he *came out again* to the public tribunal where the Jews were assembled, *and* having ordered Jesus to be led thither, he *said to them*, just before he appeared, *Behold, I am bringing him out to you* again, *that ye may know* and observe it, *that I* can *find no fault in him*, though the tortures he has now undergone are such as must surely have brought him to confession, if he were indeed guilty.

forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 *Then*, as he spake these words, *Jesus came out* of the prætorium *wearing the thorny crown, and the purple robe*, now also dyed in his own blood, which streamed forth from all parts of his body: *and* [*Pilate*] *said to them, Behold the man!* view him attentively; and when you see what dreadful things the poor unhappy creature has suffered, let that content you; for surely, considering his innocence, he has suffered already much more than enough.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man.

6 *When therefore the chief-priests and* [*their*] attending *officers saw him*, fearing lest the people should relent, *they* presently renewed their exclamations, and eagerly *cried out* as before, *saying*, We know the man sufficiently: away with him to the cross; *crucify* [*him*] *crucify* [*him*]; and immediately order the wretch to be executed.

6 When the chief-priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*.—

Pilate on this *said to them*, If ye are thus resolute and inexorable, I leave him in your hands, to dispose of him as you think fit: *take ye him* therefore, if it must be so, *and crucify* [*him*] yourselves; but I desire to discharge myself from having any thing to do in it, either by myself, or by my Roman guards; *for*, as I have told you again and again, *I find no fault in him* worthy of any such punishment.

—Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*, for I find no fault in him.

7 *The Jews* then *answered him*, There is no room to represent him as a faultless person, nor any reason to be backward to condemn him; but these objections you have made oblige us to mention one circumstance which, for the horror of it we would willingly have concealed:

7 The Jews answered him, We have

a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

SECT. clxxxviii

John XIX. 7.

we have a Divine *law* which we received from heaven, by which blasphemy is forbidden on the highest penalties; *and by* this *our law he ought to die*, though he were not chargeable with sedition and treason, *because he has made himself the Son of* the most high *God*, in such a sense as no creature can be; and this he declared but this morning in open court. (Compare Mat. xxvi. 63, 64; Mark xiv. 62; and Luke xxii. 70, p. 507.)

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

8 *When Pilate therefore heard this expression, he was* still *more afraid* than before;[f] for the Romans believed many poetical stories of men begotten by their deities, and thought them a kind of demi-gods, who could not be injured without engaging their divine parents in the quarrel. *And* therefore apprehending that his wife's dream might also take its rise from such a cause, *he entered again into the palace, and* taking him aside, he *said to Jesus*, Tell me plainly from *whence* thou camest, and from whom *art thou* descended? and what is this Divine original which thou art charged with claiming?[g] *But Jesus*, knowing that his innocence was already apparent, even to the conviction of Pilate's conscience, *gave him no answer* to that question.

9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not, that I have power to

10 *Then Pilate* in surprise *said to him*, What, *dost thou* make me no reply, and *not* so much as *speak to me* in such a circumstance as this, in which thy life is so evidently concerned? *Dost thou not know, that I have power* and authority

[f] *He was* still *more afraid* than before.] Though I think, with Mr. Cradock, and several others, the interpretation given in the paraphrase the most natural; yet I cannot forbear mentioning that of Dr. Lardner, who thinks he was afraid of a sedition among the Jews, from his knowledge of their great obstinacy in any thing in which religion might seem to be concerned; and he adds, he might be the more reasonably alarmed on this head, as since the beginning of his government he had met with two remarkable instances of their stiffness; one in an attempt he made to bring the image of Cæsar into Jerusalem; the other in a design he had formed of supplying the city with water at the expence of the sacred treasury of the temple. See Lard. Credib. part i. Vol. I. p. 330—336.

[g] *Whence art thou?*] It is strange Mr. Locke should think, (as he does in his Reasonableness of Christianity, Vol. I. p. 133.) that Christ declined giving him an answer, lest when he heard he was born at Bethlehem, he should have any such apprehensions as Herod had entertained. Pilate probably knew nothing at all of that prophecy, as Herod himself indeed did not, till he had learnt it from the Jewish scribes whom he consulted on Christ's birth. (Mat. ii. 4 5, 6, Vol. I. p. 81.) The answer which our Lord had made to his former inquiries, shewed how far he was from declining any danger; and the true reason of his present silence was, that Pilate's unsteady conduct rendered him unworthy of any farther information.

SECT. CLXXVIII. John XIX. 11.

to crucify thee, and have power to release thee, if I please, notwithstanding all the clamorous demands of thine enemies.[h]

crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Jesus calmly *replied, Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above,* from the God of heaven, whose providence I acknowledge in all these events:[i] *therefore he who has delivered me to thee,* even the Jewish high-priest with his council, having far greater opportunities of knowing him and his law, *hath the greater* and more aggravated *sin;* yet thou thyself canst not but know, that on the principles of natural equity, an innocent person ought not to be given up to popular fury.

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

12 *And from this time Pilate* was so far satisfied of the injustice of the prosecution, and of the innocence of Jesus, that he *endeavoured* the more *earnestly to release him. But the Jews* still insisted on his passing sentence on him to be crucified; and apprehensive of the governor's design, that they effectually might put a stop to his

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him:

[h] *Dost thou not know that I have power to crucify thee?* &c.] Even they who maintain that the Jews had a power of executing capital sentences in Christ's time, acknowledge that power to have been under the control of the Roman governor; and that it was in fact so often controlled, that at last the Jewish sanhedrim removed from the chamber in which alone they could regularly pass them, that they might not have the mortification of seeing continually how little their decisions availed, when the most notorious criminal, if he had but money, could buy a pardon from their common masters. So that the dispute, after all the noise it has made in the learned world, seems at last to terminate in this nicety, "whether the consent of the Roman governor were expressly asked "before the Jews proceeded to an execution, or were taken for granted if "the contrary did not appear?" Or, in other words, "Whether the efficacy "of a sentence passed by the Jews were "owing to the express consent or the "connivance of the Romans?" The conduct of the Jews in this case seems to prove the former of these to have been the true state of the affair; and vindicates not only the substance of what Dr. Lardner has maintained, but the particular manner in which he expresses it. See note [c] on Mar. xxvii. 2, p. 511.

[i] *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above.*] Some have thought that the word ἄνωθεν, *from above,* refers to the situation of the temple, which stood much higher than the prætorium; and that it is as if Jesus had said, "I know that whatever "thou dost against me, is only in con-"sequence of the sentence passed in "yonder court held above; so that their "guilt is greater than thine." But though this would very well account for the connection of the latter part of the verse, I cannot think it altogether just; for had Providence permitted Pilate to seize Christ as one dangerous to Cæsar's dignity, he would have had as much power of putting him to death as he now had. It is therefore much more reasonable to suppose it refers to the permission of God's providence. No thought was more proper to the occasion; and I think the interpretation I have given to the latter clause in this view, is natural, though not very common. But if any are not satisfied with it, they may consider whether διὰ τοῦτο may not be connected with the beginning of the verse, so that it might be translated, *Thou couldest have no power at all against me, unless it were given thee from above for this purpose.* (Compare note [f] on John vii. 21, sect. xcix.)

but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar.

intention of discharging him, they eagerly *cried out, saying, If thou let this man go* off with his life, *thou art not Cæsar's friend*, though thou bearest his commission, and representest his person; for *every one that makes himself a king* of Judea *speaks against Cæsar* our emperor, and in effect arraigns the legality of his government here. SECT. clxxxviii. John XIX. 12.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

When Pilate therefore heard that speech, he was very much alarmed, as he well knew how suspicious a prince Tiberius was, and how many spies he kept on all his officers, that nothing might be done or permitted by them in any of the provinces, which could at all interfere with his authority:[k] and, that he might not then be charged with any want of zeal for Cæsar's interest, *he brought Jesus out* of the palace again, *and* once more *sat down on the tribunal*, which was then erected (as was said before, p. 512.) without the palace, *in a place called* in Greek, Lithostratan, or *the Pavement*, on account of a beautiful piece of Mosaic work with which the floor was adorned: *but in Hebrew* it was called *Gabbatha*, or the High-place, because it stood on an eminence, so that the judge, being seated there on his tribunal, might be heard and seen by a considerable number of people.[l] 13

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about

And it was then *the preparation of the passover*, or the sixth day of the week, and consequently the day which fell before the paschal sabbath, which was observed with some peculiar solemnity; (see John xix. 31, sect. excii.) *and* the morning was so far advanced, that it [*was*] drawing on apace *towards the sixth hour*, and was now about the third hour, or nine in the morning,[m] which obliged them to dispatch, that 14

[k] *As he well knew how suspicious a prince Tiberius was, &c.*] Every body that knows the character of Tiberius, especially as illustrated by Suetonius in his excellent History, will see how naturally Pilate might be apprehensive on this head.

[l] *In Hebrew, Gabbatha.*] There are various etymologies of this word. I think the most probable is that which derives it from גבה *elevavit*, and so it intimates its being *raised on high*. It was, perhaps, a kind of stage, or scaffold, in the midst of a spacious area belonging to the palace, in which the governor might place himself, on public, and especially on judicial occasions. It plainly appears from the connection of the words, that it was not in his house, but somewhere without, probably in some open place.

[m] *It was drawing on apace towards the sixth hour*, and was now about the third hour, *&c.*] Difficulties which seem to me quite invincible attend the reading which is generally received. [*It was about the sixth hour*,] whether we reckon it, according to the Roman method of computation, six in the morning, or, according

sect. clxxxviii John XIX. 14

they might have execution done, as usual, before noon. And Pilate, finding he must, after all, yield to the people, and consent to the death of Jesus; lest his former struggle should be misrepresented at Rome, was resolved to manage this incident so as to procure from the Jews a public acknowledgment of Cæsar's authority: *and* therefore, pointing to Jesus, as he now appeared in this mock pomp of royalty, *he says to the Jews*, who were present in vast numbers, *Behold your king*, if you think fit to own him, as it is said many of you have done. *But they* again *cried out* with indignation and disdain, *Away with* [*him*,] *away with* [*him*;] we are so far from owning him, that we desire thee to *crucify him*. *Pilate says to them*, What, *shall I crucify your king?* How strange, and how extravagant a demand is this! And *the chief priests answered*, in the name of all the people, *We have*

the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your king!

15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests an-

to the Jewish computation, twelve at noon.—The best commentators I know, (and among the rest of late, Dr. Guyse,) think the whole difficulty of reconciling these words of John with Mark, who tells us, (chap. xv. 25, sect. clxxxix.) that Christ was crucified at the third hour; and with Matthew and Luke, who exactly agree with him in fixing the time of that darkness which happened while Christ hung upon the cross, (compare Mat. xxvii. 45: Luke xxiii. 44; and Mark xv. 33, sect. cxci.) is easily solved by understanding it, according to the Roman account, of six in the morning. But as John was a Jew, and elsewhere seems to use the Jewish account, (John i. 39. iv. 6, 52.) that very supposition is in general improbable. Or if, out of regard to the considerations which the learned, but here dubious and perplexed Zeltnerus has urged, (see Zeltner. Hor. Pilat. p. 14, *& seq.*) we were to grant in general a supposable case; very strong objections will lie against supposing it here. For though we should, with many critics take it for granted, that the passover here fell late in April, (which was the latest it could fall,) the sun would not rise at Jerusalem till near five o'clock, and one cannot suppose the sanhedrim assembled till about break of day. How then is it possible, that their condemnation of Christ, his arraignment and examination, first before Pilate, then before Herod, together with Pilate's repeated examinations of him, and conferences with the Jews about him as also the change of dress, scourging, crowning with thorns, &c should be dispatched by six? The very contents of the preceding sections seem to demonstrate the contrary.—On the other hand, it could not now be twelve at noon, since Mark assures us to the contrary, and his account is confirmed both by Matthew and Luke. (See the places just now quoted, and note [d] on Mark xv. 25, sect. clxxxix.)—I cannot therefore but conclude with Columelus, (Observ. p. 77.) Beza and Erasmus, that instead of the sixth we should read the third hour, that is, nine in the morning. For this we have the authority of the Cambridge manuscript, and of Peter of Alexandria, who expressly asserts it was τριτη, *the third*, in the original copy, which he says continued till his time; and though as Dr. Mill abundantly shews in his Annotation on this place, all the best manuscripts and ancient versions are on the other side, I am obliged here to follow the superior authority of common sense; however, in submission to the greatest number of copies. I have still retained the common reading in the version, and have only given what I apprehend to be the true reading in the paraphrase.—Some other unsatisfactory hypothesis will be touched on in the note last referred to. See a large and accurate view of them in Wolf. Cur. Phil. Vol. I. page 969—976.

swered, We have no king but Cæsar.

no king but the emperor Tiberius *Cæsar*, whose royal authority we all of us acknowledge, and will always maintain.

SECT. CXXXVIII.

MAT. XXVII. 24. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it*.

Mat. XXVII. 24

And Pilate, seeing that it signified nothing any longer to oppose the popular torrent, *but that they rather grew* more *tumultuous* by the delay, was determined however to do all he could to make his own conscience easy in complying with this their unjust request; and therefore *he took water, and washed his hands in the presence of the multitude*,[n] *saying*, I call heaven and earth to witness that *I am innocent of the blood of this righteous* [*man*]; *look you* [*to*] the consequences of shedding [*it*], and remember you are answerable for them, whatever they may prove.

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

25 *And all the people answered, saying*, We will venture those consequences, *may his blood*, if innocent, *be on us, and on our children!* and may the curse of shedding it, lie upon us throughout all generations![o]

[n] *He took water, and washed his hands*, &c.] It is well known, that the Jews in some cases were appointed to *wash their hands*, as a solemn token, that they were not themselves concerned in the murder committed by some unknown person: (see Deut. xxi. 6—9.) but, as this was also a rite that was frequently used by the Gentiles in token of innocence, it is more probable, that Pilate, who was a Gentile, did it in conformity to them. See Grotius, in loc. and Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 122, 123.

[o] *May his blood be on us, and on our children!*] As this terrible imprecation was dreadfully answered in the ruin so quickly brought on the Jewish nation, and the calamities which have since pursued that wretched people, in almost all ages and countries; so it was peculiarly illustrated in the severity with which Titus, merciful as he naturally was, treated the Jews whom he took during the siege of Jerusalem; of whom Josephus himself writes, (Bell. Jud, lib, v. cap. 11, (al. vi. 12,) § 1.) that μαστιγωμενοι ανεσταυρουντο, *having been scourged and tortured in a very terrible manner, they were crucified* in the view, and near the walls of this city; perhaps, among other places, on mount Calvary; and it is very probable, this might be the fate of some of those very persons who now joined in this cry, as it undoubtedly was of many of their children. For Josephus who was an eye-witness, expressly declares, "that the number of those "thus crucified was so great, that there "was not room for the crosses to stand "by each other; and that at last they "had not wood enough to make crosses "of." A passage which, especially when compared with the verse before us, impresses and astonishes me beyond any other which I recollect in the whole story. If this were not the very *finger of God*, pointing out their crime in *crucifying his Son*, it is hard to say what could deserve to be called so.—Elsner has abundantly shewn, that among the Grecks, the persons on whose testimony others were put to death, used, by a very solemn execration, to devote themselves to the divine vengeance, if the person so condemned were not really guilty. (Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 123—125.)—We are told by Grotius, (de Jure Bell. & Pac. lib. iii. cap. 4. § 9, No. 2.) that Titus commanded the women and children of the Jews to be exposed in theatres, and there to be devoured by wild beasts: a fact which, I should have thought it extremely proper to mention here, if any authority were produced to support it. But as I cannot meet with any such account in Josephus, I am ready to ascribe what Grotius says of it, to a slip of memory in that great critic; especially, considering how improbable it was, that so hu-

SECT. CXXXVIII. Luke XXIII.

And when they had said this, *Pilate*, who now was something easier in his own mind, and was *desirous to satisfy the people*,[p] since he perceived it could be done no other way, *pronounced sen-*
24 *tence, that what they demanded should be done*, and that Jesus should be put to death.

25 *And* in pursuance of that sentence, *he released to them Barrabas, who* (as was said before) *was thrown into prison for sedition and murder*; but *whom*, aggravated as his crimes were, *they had* importunately *desired* in preference to Christ; *and having* (as we related above, John xix. 1, p. 525.) already *scourged Jesus*, he did not renew that torture;[q] however, *he delivered him to their will to be crucified*, with such circumstances as they thought proper; and they soon shewed that their tender mercies were cruel.

Mat. XXVII.

And when the Jewish mob had thus prevailed, *after they had mocked* and insulted him for a
31 while, just as the Roman soldiers had before done in the prætorium, deriding his pretences to a kingdom, and abusing him like the vilest slave, *they took the purple robe off from him*,[r] *and having dressed him* again *in his own garments*, they *led*

Luke XXIII. 24. And Pilate [willing to content the people] gave sentence that it should be as they required. [Mark xv. 15.—]

25 And he released to them [Barabbas,] that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired, [and when he had scourged Jesus,] he delivered him to their will to be crucified.] [Mat. xxvii. 26. Mark xv.—15. John xix. 16.—]

Mat. XXVII. 31. And after that they had mocked him, they took the [purple] robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to

mane a prince as Titus should be guilty of such almost unexampled cruelty. On the contrary, in the only passage I recollect, where Josephus speaks of exposing the Jewish captives to wild beasts, (Joseph Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 16,) § 2.) it is expressly said, that Titus sold all who were under seventeen years old.

[p] *Desirous to satisfy the people*: το ἱκανον ποιησαι.] As his former administration had given them a great deal of disgust, he might very probably think it absolutely necessary thus to appease them: yet they afterwards followed him with their accusations to his ruin; and thus, by the righteous judgment of God, he lost all the advantage which he hoped to gain by this base compliance, as Felix did, when he afterwards injured Paul on the same unworthy principles. Acts xxiv. 27.

[q] *Having* already *scourged Jesus*: φραγελλωσας.] Many critics, and among the rest Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 125.) have shewn, that scourging used to precede crucifixion; but as John, who is most exact in his account of this part of the story, mentions his having been scourged before, and says nothing of the repetition of it, (which, considering Pilate's conviction of his innocence, he would probably spare,) I choose to interpret the word in this manner, which the original will very well bear.

[r] *They took the purple robe off from him.*] It is observable, as we have seen above, p. 526, that Matthew, (chap. xxvii. 28.) mentions *a scarlet robe*, χλαμυδα κοκκινην, and Mark (chap. xv. 17, as well as here,) *a purple garment*, την πορφυραν. I take not upon me to determine, whether either of these words be used for the other, waving, as in some other cases, the most exact signification; or whether there were *two garments* used, *a purple vest*, and over that *a scarlet robe*. However, it is probable, whatever they were, Pilate, or any of his chief officers would not cover his bleeding body with any thing better than an old, and perhaps tattered habit, which answered their contemptuous purpose much better than the best which the governor's wardrobe could have afforded.

crucify him [Mark xv. 20.] *him away to be crucified*, in the manner which we shall presently relate. SECT. clxxxviii

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us now, by a lively act of faith, bring forth the blessed Jesus to our imagination, as Pilate brought him forth to the people. Let us with affectionate sympathy survey the indignities which were offered him, when he *gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; and hid not his face from shame and spitting*; (Isa. l. 6.) Behold the man, wearing his purple robe and thorny crown, and bearing the reed which smote him, in his right hand for a sceptre! Behold, not merely the man, but the Son of God, thus vilely degraded, thus infamously abused! Shall we, as it were, increase his sufferings, and, while we condemn the fury and cruelty of the Jews, shall we *crucify him to ourselves afresh, and put him to an open shame?* (Heb. vi. 6.) Or, shall we overlook him with slight and contempt, and *hide our faces from him*, who for our sake thus exposed his own? (Isa. liii. 3.) John xix 15. Ver. 1. Mat. xxvii. 29. John xix. 5.

Let the caution even of this heathen judge, who feared, when he heard he so much as pretended to be the Son of God, engage us to reverence him, especially considering in how powerful a manner he has since been *declared to be so*; (Rom. i. 4.) Let us in this sense have nothing to do with the blood of this just Person.—Let his example teach us patiently to submit to those sufferings which God shall appoint for us, remembering that no enemies, and no calamities we meet with, could *have any power against us, except it were given* them *from above*. 7, 8 Mat. xxvi. 10. John xix. 11.

How wisely was it ordered by Divine Providence, that Pilate should be obliged thus to acquit Christ, even while he condemned him; and to speak of him as a righteous person, in the same breath with which he doomed him to the death of the most flagitious malefactor! And how lamentably does the power of worldly interest over conscience appear, when, after all the convictions of his own mind, as well as the admonitions of his wife, he yet gave him up to popular fury. O Pilate, how gloriously hadst thou fallen in the defence of the Son of God! and how justly did God afterwards leave thee to perish by the resentment of that people whom thou wast now so studious to oblige![s] Mat. xxvii. 24, 26. Luke xxiii. 24, 25

[s] Leave thee to perish, *&c.*] Josephus (Antiq. lib. xviii. chap. 4. [al. 5,] § 1. 2.) expressly assures us, that Pilate, having slain a considerable number of seditious Samaritans, was deposed from his government by Vitellius, and sent to Tiberius at Rome, who died before he arrived there. And Eusebius tells us, (Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. cap. 7.) that quickly after, (having, as others say, been banished to Vienne in Gaul) he laid violent hands upon himself, falling on his own sword. Agrippa, who was an eye-witness to many of his enormities, speaks of him in his oration to Caius Cesar, as one who had been a man of a most infamous cha-

SECT. CLXXXVIII. Mat. XXVII. 25.

Who can without trembling read that dreadful imprecation, *May his blood be on us, and on our children!* Words which, even to this day, have their remarkable and terrible accomplishment in that curse, which has pursued the Jews through seventeen hundred years. Lord, may it at length be averted, and even turned into a blessing! May they *look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn*, till all the obstinacy of their hearts be subdued! till they bow down in glad submission to that King, whom God has set on his holy hill, and thus are brought themselves to reign with him in everlasting honour and joy!

SECT. CLXXXIX.

Jesus, being delivered up by Pilate to the rage of the people, bears his cross to Calvary, and is there nailed to it. Mat. XXVII. 32—34. 38. Mark XV. 21—23. 25. 27, 28. Luke XXIII. 26—34.—John XIX. 16—18.

JOHN XIX.—16.

SECT. CLXXXIX. John XIX. 16.

NOW after Pilate had passed sentence upon Jesus, to satisfy the restless clamour of the Jews, and had delivered him to the soldiers to be crucified, his prosecutors, having gained their point, hastened his execution; *and* having insulted and abused him (as was said before), *they took Jesus, and led him away* to that terrible punishment.[a]

JOHN XIX.—16. AND they took Jesus, and led him away.

Luke XXIII. 32

And, to expose him to the greater ignominy and reproach, and to prejudice the people more strongly against him, *there were also two other* [*men, who were*] condemned to die upon the cross for a robbery, and were well known to be great *malefactors*, that were *led* out of Jerusalem

LUKE XXIII. 32. And there were also two other malefactors

racter (Philo, Jud. in Leg. p. 1034); and by that manner of speaking, as Valesius well observes, it is plainly intimated he was then dead. Probably the accusations of other Jews following him, had before that proved his destruction.

[a] *They took Jesus and led him away.*] It is evident, this text is parallel to Mat. xxvii.—31. and Mark xv.—20. But I have here, as in some other instances of two or more parallel passages, put one at the conclusion of a former section, and the other at the beginning of the next, for a better connection.—I may also add, that this seems to me the exact place of Mat. xxvii. 3—10, in which the evangelist relates the tragical end of Judas; but I hope I shall be indulged in transposing it, partly that I may preserve a better proportion in the length of the sections, and chiefly that I may not interrupt the important story of Christ's passion: and I more easily allow myself to do it, because probably the very same consideration engaged Matthew a little to anticipate it. Let it only here be observed, that the death of this traitor seems to have happened before that of his Master: so speedily did the Divine vengeance pursue his aggravated crime

led with him, to be put to death.

SECT. CLXXXIX.

with him, to be executed at the same time; that in such company he might be thought to suffer for the worst of crimes.

JOHN XIX. 17. And he bearing his cross, went forth into a place called *the place* of a scull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha.

And Jesus, thus attended as a criminal, was led through the city, *carrying* a heavy part of *his cross* on his shoulders, according to the custom of those who were to be crucified: and in this manner *he went out* of the city *to a place* which lay on the western side of Jerusalem, but a little without the boundaries of it,[b] *which was called in the Hebrew* language *Golgotha,* [*or*] *the place of a scull;* because the bodies of many criminals, having been executed on that little eminence, were buried there.

John XIX. 17.

LUKE XXIII. 26. And as they led him away, [they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name,] [Mark, the father of Alexander and Rufus, who passed by, coming out of the country, *and*] they laid hold on *him;* [*and* him they compelled to bear his cross]: and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus. [Mat. xxvii. 32. Mark xv. 21.]

And as they led him on, Jesus was now so faint with the loss of blood, so very sore with the lashes and bruises he had received, and so fatigued with the load of such a large piece of timber, that he was not able to proceed so fast as they desired, especially considering how little time they had before them to finish their work. And as he was advancing slowly to the place of execution, *they met* on the road a poor African, who was *a native of Cyrene, named Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus,* who afterwards became Christians, and were of some note in the church: this Simon at that time was *passing by, as he came out of the country* to Jerusalem; [*and*] *they* immediately *laid hold on* [*him*] as one fit for their purpose, finding him a strong man, and it may be, suspecting that he was a favourer of Jesus; [*and*] pretending that the authority of the Roman governor impowered them to press any they met for this service, they *compelled him to carry* at least one end of *his cross; and* accordingly *on him they laid the cross, that he might carry it after Jesus.*

Luke xxiii. 26

27 And there followed him a great company of people,

And a great multitude of people crowded after

[b] *Carrying* a heavy part of *his cross, went out* of the city, &c.] Dr. La dner has abundantly proved from many quotations, that it was customary, not only for the Jews, (Numb. xv. 35; 1 Kings xxi. 13; Acts vii. 58,) but also for the Sicilians, Ephesians, and Romans, to execute their malefactors without the gates of their cities. (See his Credibility, part i. Vol. I. p. 354, 355.)—What our Lord carried, was not the *whole cross*, but only that *transverse piece of wood* to which his arms were afterwards fastened; and which was called *antennæ*, or *furca*, going across the *stipes*, or *upright beam*, which was fixed in the earth. This the criminal used to carry, and therefore was called *furcifer*. See Bishop Pearson on the Creed, p. 203. 204.

SECT. CLXXXIX. Luke XXIII.

him to see the crucifixion; *and* particularly a considerable number *of women*, who had attended his ministry with great delight, *followed him* on this sad occasion; *who* were so tenderly affected with the moving sight, that they not only pitied him in their hearts, but *also* vented their concern in tears, and *bewailed and lamented him* in a very affectionate manner. *But Jesus turning to them, said,* Alas, ye *daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me,* who am willing to submit to all the sufferings appointed for me, as what I know will issue in the salvation of my people, and in my exaltation to the highest glory; *but* rather *weep for yourselves, and for your children,* in consideration of the dreadful judgments that these crimes will quickly bring upon this wretched people, whose calamities will be of much longer duration than mine. *For,* let it be remembered by you as my dying words, *behold the days are* surely and quickly *coming,* and some of you may live to see them, *in which* the innocent blood which this people have imprecated upon themselves, shall come down upon their heads in so terrible a manner, that *they shall* have reason to *say, Happy* [*are*] *the barren* women, *and the wombs which never bare* children, *and the breasts that never suckled* them: for as relations are multiplied, sorrow shall be multiplied with them, and parents shall see their children subject to all the miseries which famine, and pestilence, and sword, and captivity can bring upon them. *Then shall they* who are now triumphing in my death be trembling with horror, in expectation of their own; and, considering present calamities as the forerunners of future, yet more intolerable miseries shall *begin,* in despair of the divine mercy, *to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us,* from the more dreadful pressure of God's wrath, which is kindled against us. *For if they do these things in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?* If such agonies as these fall upon me, who am not only an innocent person, but God's own Son, when I put myself in the stead of sinners, what will become of those wretches who can feel none of my supports and consolations, and whose personal guilt makes

and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

them as proper fuel for the divine vengeance, as dry wood is to the consuming fire? SECT. CLXXXIX.

MAT. XXVII. 33. And when they were come to [the] place called Golgotha, that is to say, [the] place of a scull [Luke, *or* Calvary,] [Mark xv. 22. Luke xxiii. 33.—]

At length they arrived at the place of execution: *and when they were come* thither, even, *to the place* which (we before observed) was *called* in Hebrew *Golgotha, that is to say, the place of a scull*, a little without the city [*on*] mount *Calvary*, (which was the usual place for executing criminals, and seemed a proper spot of ground for the purpose, as on account of its eminence the malefactors crucified there might be seen at a considerable distance, and by a great number of spectators;) *They* proceeded to the fatal purpose for which they came: and as it was customary to give to dying criminals a potion of strong wine mingled with spices, to cheer their spirits, and render them less sensible of their sufferings, the soldiers who attended him *gave him* nothing better *to drink* than *vinegar mingled with gall*, by that odious mixture, farther expressing their cruelty and contempt: *and when he had tasted* [*of it*,] that he might submit to every distasteful circumstance which Providence allotted to him, *he would not drink* any large draught of it, as knowing it would answer no valuable end to do it. *And*, as some of his friends had on that occasion provided a cordial cup, *they gave him* [*also*] a draught of generous *wine to drink, mingled with myrrh* and other spices, which they thought proper on that sad occasion;[c] *but he did not receive* [*it*,] determining to bear the full force of his pains, unallayed by any such preparation, and to maintain his thoughts in the most vigorous exercise.

Mat. XXVII. 33

34 They gave him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

34

MARK XV. 23. And they [*also*] gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

Mark xv. 23

25 And it was the third hour, and [there]

And it was now *the third hour* of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning,[d] when they thus 25

[c] *They gave him also wine to drink, mingled with myrrh.*] Some think this was *sour wine*, called *vinegar* by Matthew; but I apprehend the reasons which Dr. Edwards has produced, (Exercit. part ii. N° 2, p. 178—188.) sufficiently prove, that this wine mingled with myrrh was a different mixture from the vinegar and gall, which he received so far as to taste it. Probably those pious women, some of them (as the story shews,) persons in plentiful circumstances, whose zeal engaged them to follow him to Calvary, and afterwards so liberally to prepare unguents and aromatic drugs for his embalming, had provided on this sad occasion, some rich wine tempered with choice spices, which with perfect propriety he refused to taste, lest malice should insinuate, he intended thereby to render himself insensible of the terrors of death.

[d] *It was* now *the third hour* of the day, or nine o'clock in the morning.] I can by no means agree with Vossius, and some other critics, to read it here the

SECT. CLXXXIX.

brought him to mount Calvary; *and there,* when all things were made ready, *they* nailed his hands and his feet to the cross, and *crucified him.* *And they* also *crucified with him the two malefactors,* [*or*] *robbers,* that were mentioned before, *the one on his right hand, and the other on the left; and* they placed *Jesus in the midst,* as a mark of the greatest indignity, to prejudice the multitude the more against him, and to induce them to regard him as the most infamous criminal of the three. *And* thus *the scripture was* remarkably *fulfilled* (Isa. liii. 12.) in *which* the prophet Isaiah speaking with an amazing plainness of the sufferings of the Messiah, *saith,* "*And he was numbered with the transgressors.*"[e]

Mark XV. 27.

28

they crucified him: —Luke xxiii. 33.—John xix. 18.—]

27 And with him they crucify [Luke, the malefactors, *or*] two thieves, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left, [John, and Jesus in the midst.] [Mat. xxvii. 38. Luke xxiii.—33. John xix.—18.]

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

And Jesus made no manner of resistance to this cruel violence, nor did he revile them even when they were distorting his limbs as on a rack, and nailing his hands and his feet on the full stretch to the accursed tree; but, in the midst of his anguish, he breathed out his soul in a compassionate prayer for his murderers: and pleading the only excuse which the most extensive charity could suggest, he *said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they are doing:*[f] The Roman soldiers, who were the imme-

Luke xxiii. 34.

Luke XXIII. 34. —Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

sixth hour; for there ought to be very cogent reasons for departing from the authority of all the best copies and ancient versions: (see Dr. Mill, in loc.) Nor can I think, with Heinsius, that these words in Mark refer not to the hour of the day in which Christ was crucified, but to the length of time he had been upon the cross when his garments were divided, which Mark had spoken of just before, in ver. 24. For as Mark mentions the sixth and the ninth hour, (ver. 33.) this interpretation would oblige us to conclude, either that Mark used two very different ways of computation within the compass of a few verses, or else that Christ did not expire till he had been nine hours on the cross. And as these objections equally lie against Godwyn's Hypothesis, (Moses and Aaron, book iii. chap. i.) that we are here to distinguish between the four larger and twelve smaller hours into which the day was divided; I do not think it necessary more particularly to consider it, though the learned Gerhardus in his Harmony prefers it to all others.—Compare note [m] on John xix. 14, sect. clxxxviii.

[e] *And he was numbered with the transgressors.*] I choose, in quotations from the Old Testament, to keep as close to our English version of the passage quoted as the Greek will allow me, that the memory of the hearer may assist him in distinguishing the text; else I should have rendered ανομων, *criminals* as the word פֹּשְׁעִים which Isaiah uses, seems also to signify. The least offence is a transgression of the law of God, or a stepping over the boundaries he has prescribed; but this imports much more.

[f] *Father, forgive them,* &c.] This is one of the most striking passages in the world. While they are actually nailing him to the cross, he seems to feel the injury these poor creatures did to their own souls, more than the wounds they gave him; and as it were to forget his

diate instruments of his death, having indeed but little knowledge of him; and the Jews, who were the authors of it, through their obstinate prejudices not apprehending who he was; "for "if they had known him, they would not have "crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Cor. ii. 8.) SECT. CLXXXIX.

IMPROVEMENT.

HERE let us pause a while, and make a few serious reflections on this amazing story, which the evangelists relate with so much simplicity. Behold the Son of God bearing his cross, fainting under the load of it, and at length extended upon it, and nailed to it. *Him they took, and with wicked hands crucified and slew him;* (Acts ii. 23.) Blessed Jesus, was it for this that thou didst honour our nature by a union to thine own, and come from thy throne of glory to visit these abodes of misery and guilt! Was it for this, that so many gracious discourses were delivered, and so many works of love and power performed! for this, that thou mightest be treated as the worst of criminals, and suspended on a cross in the air, as if unworthy of a place on earth even to die upon! Amazing and lamentable sight! Justly, O sun, mightest thou blush to see it! justly, O earth, mightest thou tremble to support it! John xix. 17, 18 Mark xv. 27, 28

Lord, like these pious women, who had the zeal and fortitude to attend thee, when thine own apostles forsook thee and fled, we would follow thee weeping: yet not for thee, but for ourselves; that our guilt had brought us under a condemnation, from which we could be *redeemed* by nothing less than the *precious blood of the Son of God:* that *Lamb without blemish and without spot.* (1 Pet. i. 19.)—We would behold herein, *the goodness and the severity of God,* (Rom. xi. 22.): for while the riches of his goodness are displayed in his providing a ransom for the redemption of lost sinners, an awful proof is given of the severity of his justice, in his not sparing his own Son, nor exempting him from the sorrows and sufferings due to sin, when he came to put himself in the stead of sinners: and may we not in such a view *tremble for fear of him, and be afraid of his judgments?* (Psal. cxix. 120.) Who can support the weight of his indignation, especially when it shall come aggravated by the abuse of so much love! *If these things be done in the green wood, what shall be done in the dry?* And if such sufferings be inflicted, where there was not any personal guilt to kindle the flame, in one who answered for the sins of others; what then Luke xxiii. 27, 28 31

own anguish, in a concern for their salvation. I render τι ποιουσι, *what they are doing,* as thinking that version most expressive of the present circumstance; and indeed it is the exact import of what grammarians call the present tense.

SECT. CLXXXIX. will be the end of those who, by their own iniquities, are become as fuel prepared for the fire, and are as vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?

Ver. 33. How shocking is it to behold the vile indignities that were put upon a suffering Jesus, and to reflect upon the cruel treatment that he met with from his insulting enemies! Yet have not we been verily guilty concerning this matter? (Gen. xlii. 21.) Are we not chargeable with despising Christ? and have we *not crucified the son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame?*

34— (Heb. vi. 6.) O may that apology be heard in our favour! *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!* For surely sinners do not know what they do, when they pierce Christ by their sins, and turn away their faces from him.—But under all his sufferings, how amazing was his meekness! and how compassionate the concern which he expressed for his most cruel persecutors! May we learn patience, and love to our enemies, from so bright an example of it! May we, like him, *bless them that curse us, and pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us!* (Mat. v. 44.) Instead of being ingenious to aggravate their faults, and to paint them in the most shocking colours, let us rather seek for the best excuses which even the worst of causes will fairly bear; influenced by that charity which, unconstrained, *believes no evil,* and *hopeth all things* even against hope. (1 Cor. xiii. 5, 7.)

ibid. Gracious Saviour! thy dying prayer, and thy dying blood, were not *like water spilt upon the ground:* they *came up in remembrance before God,* when thy gospel began to be preached at Jerusalem: and multitudes, who were now *consenting to thy death, gladly received thy word, and were baptized,* (Acts ii. 41.): and they are now in glory, celebrating that grace which has taken out the scarlet and crimson dye of their sins, and turned that blood, which they so impiously shed, into the balm of their wounds, and the life of their souls.

SECT. CXC.

Christ's garments are divided by lot; and while he is himself insulted on the cross, he shews his mercy to the penitent thief.
Mat. XXVII. 35—37. 39—44. Mark XV. 24. 26. 29—32. Luke XXIII.—34—43. John XIX. 19—24.

JOHN XIX. 23.

THE soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments which according to custom they had stripped off, that the shame of suffering naked, might be added to

JOHN XIX. 23. THEN the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and

SECT. CXC. John XIX.

made four parts, to every soldier a part; [Mark, casting lots upon them, what every man should take;] and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.—[Mat. xxvii. 35.—Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii.—34.]

all the agony of the cross; *and* as it was usual for the executioners to have the garments of the criminal whom they put to death, they *made four parts* of his clothes, assigning *to each soldier* of the quaternion employed on that occasion *a part*, and *casting lots upon them which* of the four *each man should take: and* they took *also the vest*, or inner-garment: *now the vest* had this curious circumstance attending it, that it *was without* any *seam* at all, being *woven from the top throughout* in one whole piece.[a] And as this was considered by them as more valuable than ordinary, *they said therefore one to another, Let us not* spoil this coat as we must do if we go about to *tear it* into four parts, *but let us cast lots for it, whose* the whole of *it shall be*: and accordingly they did so, *that the scripture spoken by the prophet* David in the person of the Messiah *might* thus *be* literally *fulfilled, which saith*, (Psalm xxii. 18.) "*They divided my garments among them, and cast lots for my vesture.*"[b] *These things therefore the soldiers did*, though with the utmost freedom as to themselves, yet by the secret disposal of Providence, which, by an undiscerned influence on their minds, led them to act in a remarkable correspondence to the Divine oracle. *And*, having done thus, *they sat down* near the cross, *and guarded him*, and the other two who were crucified with him, that none might come *there* to rescue them before they were quite dead.[c]

23

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rent it, but cast lots for it whose it shall be: that the scripture [spoken by the prophet] might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. [Mat. xxvii. 35.]

24

MAT XXVII. 36. And sitting down, they watched him there:

Mat. xxvii. 36

[a] *Woven from the top throughout* in one whole piece.] Perhaps this curious garment might be the work and present of some of the pious women who attended him, and ministered to him of their substance, (Luke viii. 3.) The hint here given of its make, has set some mechanical heads to work, to contrive a frame for weaving such a vest; and a good cut of it may be seen in Calmet's Dictionary, on the word Vestments, Vol. III. p. 19.

[b] *They divided my garments among them*, &c.] We are no where told that David's goods were thus divided; and there are several other passages in the xxiid psalm, particularly that in which mention is made of piercing his hands and his feet, to which no circumstance of David's personal sufferings seems to have borne any resemblance. It therefore seems to me exceeding probable, that in this scripture, and some others, the mind of the prophet was thrown into a preternatural ecstacy, in which, on some secret intimation given to him, that he therein personated the Messiah, he wrote expressly what the Spirit dictated, without any particular regard to himself; so that David might, for any thing I can find, with equal propriety have written such a psalm, if his whole life had been as prosperous and peaceable as the reign of Solomon his son. (Compare 1 Pet. i. 10—12.)

[c] That none might come to rescue them, &c.] This was the more necessary in this kind of execution, because the wounds given in crucifixion were not generally mortal. The person crucified died partly by the loss of his blood, if any large ves-

SECT. CXC. Mat. XXVII.

And, as the usual method was in cases of crucifixion, *they put* upon the cross *over his head a superscription* in capital letters,[d] containing the substance *of his* pretended *crime, written* 37 in these remarkable words, *THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And* indeed it was *Pilate* who *wrote* John xix. 19 [*this*] *title, and* ordered them to *put it on the cross*; which, howsoever it was designed as a reproach to Jesus, was in effect a declaration of his real character; and by the secret providence of God was over-ruled in a remarkable and public manner to proclaim the kingdom of Christ, while it was only meant to expose and 20 ridicule his title to it. *Many of the Jews therefore* that came up to the feast of the passover, *read this inscription; because the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city*, and lay but just without the gates: *and* that the inscription might be generally understood, *it was* expressed, by Pilate's order, in three languages, and *written* both *in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin letters*, so that it might easily be read by Jews, Romans, and most other foreigners.[e]

21 Now when this inscription was drawn up, *the chief priests of the Jews* were very much offended at the form in which it was expressed; and *therefore* objected against it, and *said to Pilate, Do not write, The king of the Jews*; for we entirely disown him under that character, as thou well knowest; *but* rather write, *that he said, I* 22 *am the king of the Jews*. But *Pilate*, who was very much displeased at the importunity by which, contrary to his inclination and judgment, they had extorted from him the

37 And set up over his head [the superscription of] his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS [John, OF NAZARETH,] THE KING OF THE JEWS. [Mark xv. 26. Luke xxiii. 38.—John xix. —19.]

JOHN XIX. 19.—And Pilate wrote [the] title, and put it on the cross.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in [letters of] Hebrew, [and] Greek, [and] Latin. [Luke xxiii.—38.]

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, write not, The king of the Jews; but that he said, I am king of the Jews.

22 Pilate answer-

sel was pierced by the nails, when nails [as here] were used; but chiefly, by the violent distortion of the limbs, which were stretched forth as on a rack; a circumstance which must no doubt occasion exquisite anguish.

[d] *They put over his head a superscription.*] This Bishop Pearson (on the Creed, p. 205), and Dr. Lardner, (Credibility, part i. book i. chap. 7, § 10, Vol. I. p. 347.) have abundantly proved to be usual in cases of any extraordinary punishment.

[e] *In Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin letters.*] It was written in Latin, for the majesty of the Roman empire; in Greek, for the information of the vast numbers of Hellenists who made use of that language, as indeed most provinces of the Roman empire did; (see Brerewood's Inquiries, chap. i—iv.) and in Hebrew, as it was the vulgar language of the place.—Thus the inscription set up in the temple, to prohibit strangers from coming within those sacred limits, was written in all these three languages. See Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 2. [al. vii. 4,] § 4.

ed, what I have written, I have written.

sentence of death he had passed upon Jesus, *answered* with some warmth, *What I have written, I have written*, and, whoever may object against it, I am determined it shall stand as it is. SECT. CXC. John XIX. 22

Mat. XXVII. 39. And [Luke, the people stood beholding: and] they that passed by, reviled him, wagging their heads, [Mark xv. 29—Luke xxiii. 35.—]

When therefore they were unable to procure any alteration, they were determined publicly to turn it into a jest; and therefore some of them went in person to Calvary, to insult and scoff at Jesus, even in his last moments. *And the* common *people*, that *stood beholding* the execution, reviled him; *and* even *they that passed by* on the road *blasphemed him, shaking their heads* at him, Mat. xxvii. 39

40 And saying, [Ah] thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself; [and] if thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. [Mark xv. —29, 30.]

in an upbraiding scornful manner; *And saying*, *Ah, thou* vain boaster, *that wouldest destroy the temple, and build it* again *in three days!* let us now see if thou canst *save thyself; and if thou art* indeed *the Son of God*, give us a proof of thy power now, and *come down from the cross;* for in thy present circumstances that will be the most proper miracle thou canst work in confirmation of thy pretended mission. 40

41 Likewise also the chief priests [Luke, and the rulers also with him derided *him, and*] [mocking, said among themselves,] with the scribes and elders, [Mark xv. 31.—Luke xxiii.—35.—]

And in like manner, also the chief priests, together *with the scribes and elders, and the rulers also* themselves, the malice of whose hearts had made them to forget the dignity of their characters, and to attend among the mob upon this base and barbarous occasion, joined *with them* in their scoffs, and with a scornful sneer *derided him; [and] mocking, said one to another.* 41

42 He saved others, himself he cannot save: if he be [Luke, Christ, the chosen of God,] the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, [Luke, *and* save himself,] [that we may see,] and we will believe him. [Mark xv. 31, 32. Luke xxiii. 35.]

Ay, this is *he* that *saved others*, and undertook to give them perfect deliverance and everlasting happiness; [*but*] now you see *he cannot save himself* from the most infamous execution: *if he be* really *the* true *Messiah, the Elect of God*, and in consequence of that Divine choice be *the king of Israel*, as he has so often pretended, *let him now come down from the cross*, [*and*] *save himself* from death *that we may see* a demonstration of his saving power, *and we will* then *believe him.*[t] 42

[t] *He saved others*, &c.] Nothing could be baser than thus to upbraid him with this saving power, which was not a vain pretence, but had produced so many noble and stupendous effects. And it was equally unreasonable to put the credit of his mission on his coming down from the cross; a vigorous spring might possibly have forced the nails from the hands and feet of a crucified person, so that he might have leaped from the cross. What Christ had so lately done before their eyes, and in part on themselves in the garden, was a far more convincing display of a divine power, than merely to have descended now, could have been. And though they

SECT. CXC. Nay, they were at once so profane and stupid, as to borrow on this occasion the words foretold by David, (Psal. xxii. 8.) and to say, "*He trusted* Mat. XXVII. 43 "*in God, and boasted of his interest in him; let him deliver him now if he will have him,* "or if he delighteth in him;" *for he* has often *said, I am the Son of God:* the priests themselves not observing that this was the very language which the murderers of the Messiah are there described as using.

43 He (rusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

Luke xxiii. 36 *And the soldiers also,* who kept guard at that time, joined with the rest of the spectators, and *mocked him; coming to him, and offering him vinegar* to drink in the midst of his agonies;

Luke XXIII. 36. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 (compare John xix. 29. p. 553.) *And saying,* as the rulers and people had done, *If thou art* really, as thou hast frequently pretended, *the King of the Jews,*[g] before thou undertakest to deliver them, *save thyself* from our power, and so begin to assert thy claim to a supreme authority.

37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

39 *And one of the malefactors also,*[h] *who hung on the cross with him,* regardless of that innocence and dignity which Jesus manifested under all his sufferings, and unaffected with a sense of his own aggravated guilt, *upbraided him with the same [reproach, and]* scornfully *blasphemed him* as an impostor, *saying, If thou art the Messiah,* why dost thou not *save thyself and us,* who are 40 now dying with thee? *But the other,* awakened to a sense of his sin, and convinced in his heart that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah, *answered* his companion, *and rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God,* even now *when thou* thyself *art in the same condemnation?* In

39 And one of the malefactors [also] which were hanged, [*or* crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth, *and*] railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. [Mat. xxvii. 44. Mark xv. 32.]

40 But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

promise upon this to believe him, there is no room to think they would have yielded to conviction; but all they meant was to insult him by it, as thinking it impossible he should escape out of their hands.

[g] *If thou art the king of the Jews.*] As this claim seemed to them the most derogatory to the Roman authority, it is no wonder, that the soldiers grounded their insults on this, rather than on his professing himself the Son of God.

[h] *One of the malefactors also.*] We are told indeed by Matthew, in the plural number, that *the thieves cast the same in his teeth;* and Mark also says, that *they that were crucified with him reviled him;* and hence, some infer, that he who afterwards proved penitent, at first joined in the blasphemy: but had that been the case, surely Luke, in so particular a narrative as his, would not have omitted it. I therefore rather conclude, with most critics, that it is what is commonly called an enallage of numbers, the plural being (as elsewhere) put for the singular. (See note [f] on Mark xiv. 5, sect. cxlv. p. 276. and note [a] on Mark i. 21, sect. xxxv. Vol. I. p. 198.)

SECT. CXC. Luke XXIII.

such an awful circumstance as this, dost thou dare to increase thy crimes with thy dying breath, and to behave thyself so insolently in the immediate view of God's righteous tribunal?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

41 *And we indeed* are *justly* thus condemned; *for we receive* no more than *what is due for the* notorious *crimes we have committed: but this* [*man*] *has done nothing* by any means *amiss*, nor is there the least insolence or absurdity in that high claim which he has made, though appearances be for the present so much against it.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

42 *And*, having thus rebuked his companion, and testified his full persuasion of the innocence of Jesus, *he* then directed his discourse to him, and *said to Jesus*, looking upon him with the humblest and the most contrite regard, *Lord*, though this wretch derides thy mission, I firmly believe it; and I beg that thou wouldest graciously *remember me when thou comest into* that *thy kingdom*, to which I doubt not but God will raise thee in spite of death and hell.[i]

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

43 *And Jesus*, turning towards him, *said to him*, with a mixture of the greatest dignity and mercy, *Verily, I say unto thee*, and solemnly assure thee of it as a most certain truth, that *This* very *day thou shalt be with me in paradise*, sharing the entertainments of that garden of God, the abode of happy spirits when separate from the body;[k]

[i] *When thou comest into thy kingdom.*] Some have inferred from hence, that this malefactor had learned something of Christ in prison, and have urged the possibility of his having exercised, perhaps, a long and deep repentance there, against the supposition of the sudden change that most have supposed in this case. But Christ's kingdom was now the subject of so much discourse, that he might, on that day, indeed in a few minutes of it, have learnt all that was necessary, as the foundation of this petition. I cannot therefore but look on this happy man, (for such, amidst all the ignominy and tortures of the cross, he surely was,) as a glorious instance of the power, as well as sovereignty of Divine grace, which, (as many have observed,) perhaps, taking the first occasion from the preternatural darkness, wrought so powerfully as to produce, by a sudden and astonishing growth in his last moments, all the virtues which could be crowded into so small a space, and which were eminently manifested in his confessing his own guilt, in his admonishing his companion for a crime, which he feared would prove fatal to him, in his vindicating the character of Christ, and reposing his confidence in him, as the Lord of a kingdom beyond the grave, when his enemies were triumphing over him, and he himself, abandoned by most of his friends, was expiring on a cross. The modesty as well as the faith of his petition may also deserve our attentive remark.

[k] *Thou shalt be with me in paradise.*] Bos has shewn (in his Exercit. Philol. page 49, 50.) that this expression, μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐσῃ, *thou shalt be with me*, was the language used when inviting guests to an entertainment; and the word paradise originally signified a garden of pleasure, such as those in which the eastern monarchs made their magnificent banquets. See Raphel. Annot. ex Xenoph. p. 119.

SECT. CXC. and there shall thy departing soul, as soon as thou hast breathed thy last, immediately begin to reap the fruits of that faith which breaks through so dark a cloud, and honours me in the midst of this infamy and distress.

IMPROVEMENT.

John XIX. 23, 24 How great and glorious does the Lord Jesus Christ appear in the midst of all those dishonours which his enemies were now heaping upon him! While these rapacious soldiers were dividing the spoils, parting his raiment among them, and casting lots for his vesture, God was working in all, to crown him with a glory which none could take from him, and to make the lustre of it so much the more conspicuous by that dark cloud which now surrounded him.

Mat. xxvii. 39—43 His enemies upbraided him as an abandoned miscreant, deserted both by God and man; but he, (though able to have come down from the cross in a moment, or by one word from thence to have struck these insolent wretches dead on the place, and to have sent their guilty spirits to accompany the fiends, under whose influence they were,) yet patiently endured all, and was as a deaf man, who heard not their reproaches, *and as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth;* (Psal. xxxviii. 13.) But as soon as the penitent thief addressed him with that humble supplication, the language of repentance, faith, and hope, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*, he immediately hears and *answers* him: and in how gracious and remarkable a phrase! *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise!* What a triumph was here, not only of mercy to the dying penitent, but of the strongest faith in God, that when to an eye of sense he seemed to be the most deserted and forgotten by him, and was on every side beset with the scorn of them that were at ease, and with the contempt of the proud, he should speak from the cross as from a throne, and undertake from thence, not only to dispense pardons, but to dispose of seats in paradise!

Luke xxiii. 42, 43

Most ungrateful, and most foolish, is the conduct of those who take encouragement from hence, to put off their repentance perhaps to a dying moment: most ungrateful, in perverting the grace of the Redeemer into an occasion of renewing their provocations against him, and hardening their hearts in their impieties: and most foolish, to imagine that what our Lord did in so singular a circumstance, is to be drawn into an ordinary precedent. This criminal had, perhaps, never heard of the gospel before: and now how cordially does he embrace it? Probably there are few saints in glory who ever honoured Christ more illustriously than this dying sinner, acknowledging him to be

the Lord of life, whom he saw in the agonies of death; and pleading his cause when his friends and brethren forsook him, and stood afar off. (Compare Mat. xxvi. 56, and Luke xxiii. 49. SECT. CXC.

But such is the corruption of mens' hearts, and such the artifice of Satan, that all other views of him are overlooked, and nothing remembered, but that he was a notorious offender, who obtained mercy in his departing moments. The Lord grant, that none who read this story here, may be added to the list of those who, despising the forbearance and long-suffering of God, and not knowing that his goodness leads to repentance, have been emboldened to abuse this scripture, so as to perish, either without crying for mercy at all, or crying for it in vain, after having treasured up an inexhaustible store of wrath, misery, and despair! (Rom. ii. 4, 5.)

SECT. CXCI.

Jesus, having recommended his mother to the care of John, and suffered many agonies and indignities on the cross, expires; amazing prodigies attending his death, and alarming the consciences of the spectators. Mat. XXVII. 45—54. Mark XV. 33—39. Luke XXIII. 44—48. John XIX. 25—30.

JOHN XIX. 25.

NOW there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary *the wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

JOHN XIX. 25.

AND while he suffered all these insults and sorrows, *there stood near the cross of Jesus,* Mary *his mother,*[a] *and his mother's sister* (whose name was also *Mary,*) who was [*the wife*] *of Cleophas,*[b] *and Mary Magdalene;* and with them SECT. CXCI. John XIX. 25.

[a] *His mother.*] Neither her own danger nor the sadness of the spectacle, nor the reproaches and insults of the people, could restrain her from performing the last office of duty and tenderness to her Divine Son on the cross. Grotius justly observes, that it was a noble instance of fortitude and zeal. Now a sword (according to Simeon's prophecy, Luke ii. 35,) struck through her tender heart, and pierced her very soul; and perhaps the extremity of her sorrows might so overwhelm her spirits, as to render her incapable of attending the sepulchre, which we do not find that she did: nor do we indeed meet with any thing after this concerning her in the sacred story, or in early antiquity; except that she continued among the disciples after our Lord's ascension, which Luke observes, Acts. i. 14. Andreas Cretensis, a writer of the seventh century, does indeed tell us, she died with John at Ephesus, many years after this, in an extreme old age; and it appears, from a letter of the council of Ephesus in the fifth century, that it was then believed she was buried there. But they pretend to shew her sepulchre at Jerusalem, and many ridiculous tales are forged concerning her death, and assumption, or being taken up into heaven, of which the best Popish authors themselves appear heartily ashamed. See Calmet's Dictionary, Vol. II. p. 141.

[b] *His mother's sister, Mary* [*the wife*] *of Cleophas.*] It is not determined in the original whether she was the *wife*, or *mother* or *daughter* of Cleophas; but critics generally suppose she was his wife; and that he was also called Alpheus, and was

SECT. CXCI.

also John, his intimate friend, the relater of this story.

John XIX. 26 *Jesus therefore seeing his mother, and* John *the disciple whom he* peculiarly *loved, standing near*, his affectionate care and regard to both so wrought in his heart in the midst of all his agonies, that he *said to his mother, Woman,*[c] *behold thy son*; consider that dear friend of mine as thy own child, and treat him with the same affection and care which thou wouldst shew to 27 me under that near relation.[d] And *then he said to that disciple, Behold thy mother*, and entertain towards her that reverence and love which a child owes to a worthy parent; for I now solemnly with my dying breath bequeath her to thy care. *And from that hour that disciple took her* home *to his own* [*house*,] and maintained her most cheerfully and respectfully as if she had indeed been his own mother.

26 Whet. Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman behold thy son.

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Mat. xxvii. 45 And Jesus having hung upon the cross about three hours, it was *now* near noon, or according to the Jewish manner of expressing the time, *it was about the sixth hour; and from the sixth hour, there was* an amazing and supernatural *darkness over the whole land* of Judea *till the ninth hour*,[e] or till three o'clock in the after-

MAT. XXVII. 45. Now [Luke, it was about the sixth hour, and] from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. [Mark xv. 33. Luke xxiii. 44.]

the father, as this Mary was the mother, of James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas, who are therefore called our Lord's brethren, or kinsmen. (Mat. xiii. 55.) See note[c] on John xiv. 22, p. 441.—Grotius indeed thinks, that Cleophas was her father, and Alpheus her husband. After all, we cannot certainly determine it: but, like most other undeterminable points, it is a matter of no great importance. I know none who has set it in a plainer and juster light than Dr. Edwards, Exercit. part ii. No. 1, p. 163, *& seq.*

[c] *Said to his mother, Woman.*] We have observed elsewhere, that Joseph probably was dead some time before; (compare note[b] on John ii. 1, Vol. I. p. 136, and note[a] on John vi. 42, Vol. I. p. 450.) and as Jesus now shewed the tender concern he had for his mother, in committing her to the care of John, so this concern that he expressed for her support, must have affected her no less, than if he had called her mother; which some have thought he might not choose to do, to avoid exposing her to the abuses of the populace, by a discovery of her near relation to him. But woman was a title he before had used in speaking to his mother, where no such caution was necessary; and it was frequently applied in ancient times, even to persons that were the most respected. See note[d] on John ii. 4, Vol. I. p. 137.

[d] *Behold thy Son.*] Some have explained these words, as if they only signified, "*Behold* a person who will carry it to "thee as *thy son*, and will take care of "thee." But as the tenderness of Jesus for his mother is expressed in the next verse, in the direction that he gives to John to treat her as his mother; it seems more natural to understand this former exhortation, as expressive of his kindness for John, and so take it as a direction given to his mother to regard him as her son with all the affection of a tender parent.

[e] *There was darkness over the whole land.*] There are so many places in which γη signifies *a particular country*, and not *the whole earth*, that I have chosen here to

noon; during which time, it was as dark as if there had been a total eclipse of the sun, though in a natural way it was impossible, as it was now full moon.[f] *And* this darkness, with which the face of nature seemed overspread, was a lively emblem of the darkness and distress of spirit with which the Lord of nature was then overwhelmed, and with which he struggled in the solemn silence, and unutterable bitterness of his soul. But *about the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying* in the Hebrew, or rather in the Syriac language, *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*[g] *that is, being interpreted* into other words, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* which was as if he had said, O my heavenly Father, wherefore dost thou add to all my other sufferings those which arise from the want of a comfortable sense of thy presence? Wherefore dost thou thus leave me alone in the combat, destitute of those sacred consolations, which thou couldest easily shed

SECT. CXCI. Mat. XXVII. 46

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying [Eloi, Eloi,] lama sabachthani? that is to say, [being interpreted,] My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? [Mark xv. 34.]

follow our translation; and the rather, because the farther we suppose this darkness to extend, the more unaccountable it is, that no Heathen writers should have mentioned it, except Phlegon; if he is indeed to be excepted. A darkness over the whole earth at once, must have been preternatural at any time; and it is morally impossible, that a multitude of accounts of it should not, even by a tradition of many hundred years, have been transmitted to posterity. What is said of the Chinese chronicles mentioning it, must be very uncertain; and as for Josephus, his omission of it, I think Dr. More with reason accounts for it, by his unwillingness to mention a fact which had so favourable an aspect on Christianity: and the Jews would, no doubt disguise it as much as they could, and perhaps might persuade him, and others, who heard the report of it at some distance of time or place, that it was only a dark cloud, or a thick mist, which the followers of Jesus had exaggerated, because it happened when their Master died. Such representations are exceeding natural to hearts corrupted by infidelity.

[f] As it was now full moon.] Mr. Shuckford, in his preface to the third volume of his excellent Connection of the Sacred and Profane History of the World, has advanced some important considerations to prove, that it is at least very uncertain, whether the Jewish months, according to the Mosaic institution began with a new moon, and consequently whether their passover, which was fixed to the fourteenth day of the first month, must always happen at full moon. But he allows that, towards the decline of their state, it did. And indeed Josephus, who, being a Jewish priest, is an unexceptionable witness in this case, seems to put it beyond all possibility of doubt; expressly asserting, that the day of expiation, and consequently their other feasts, were reckoned by the age of the moon. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 10. § 3. Δικαίᾳ τε μηνὶ καὶ πανσελήνῳ.)

[g] *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*] It is evident these are Syro-Chaldaic, and not properly Hebrew words; for in the original of Psal. xxii. 1, it is not, as here, אלי אלי but אלהי אלהי למה שבקתני למה עזבתני. Dr. Edwards thinks, our Lord in his agony repeated the words twice, with some little variation, saying at one time, *Eloi*, and at the other *Eli*. This is possible; and if it were otherwise, I doubt not but Mark has given us the word exactly, and Matthew a kind of contraction of it. See Edwards's Excit. p. 193—196.

SECT. CXCI. abroad upon my soul, and which thou knowest I have done nothing to forfeit?[h]

Mat. XXVII. 47 Jesus by the use of these words, borrowed from the beginning of the twenty-second psalm, gave the spectators a useful hint that the whole of it referred to him; and it might well have led them to observe how many passages of it had then a literal accomplishment in *him*; but if this was any part of the design, it was not apprehended by them; for the Jews took them in a different sense, *and some of them that stood by there, hearing [that]* sound of Eli, *said* in a scornful and insulting manner, *Behold this [man,]* who has been used to talk as if he had earth and heaven at command, resolves to keep up the air of the Messiah to the last, and therefore *calls for Elijah* his forerunner, as if he had any authority to bring that great prophet down from paradise to his assistance.[i]

47 [And] some of them that stood [by] there, when they heard *that*, said, [Behold] this man calleth for Elias. [Mark xv. 35.]

John XIX. 28. Immediately *after this* doleful cry, *Jesus knowing that all* the grievous and terrible *things* he had to suffer in the way to death, *were now* upon the point of being perfectly *accomplished*, and finding himself parched with a violent

JOHN XIX. 28. After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now ac-

[h] *Why hast thou forsaken me?*] The pious and judicious Lord Chief Justice Hale, has a strange reflection on these words; "We may (says he) with reverence conceive, that at the time of this "bitter cup, the soul of our blessed Redeemer was for the present overshadowed with so much astonishment and "sorrow, as to overpower and cover the "distinct sense of the reason of his "sufferings, at least in some measure "and degree." (Hale's Contemplations, Vol. I. p. 72.) But the sense given in the paraphrase is much more natural. Thus in a most humble and affectionate manner he reminds his heavenly Father, that he was only by imputation a sinner, and had himself done nothing to incur his displeasure.—I choose not, with Dr. More, (in his Theological Works, p. 292.) to render it *How far*, or to what degree, *hast thou forsaken me!* because though this would be a just version of למה the Greek word ἱνατί, which answers to it in Matthew, is not liable to such ambiguity.—I conclude with adding, that this interruption of a joyful sense of his Father's presence, (though there was, and could not but be, a rational apprehension of his constant favour, and high approbation of what he was now doing,) was as necessary, as it was that Christ should suffer at all. For had God communicated to his Son on the cross those strong consolations which he has given to some of the martyrs in their tortures, all sense of pain, and consequently all real pain would have been swallowed up; and the violence done to his body, not affecting the soul, could not properly have been called suffering.

[i] *And some of them that stood by*, &c.] Whether this was, as Dr. Edwards (Exercit. p. 196—203.) and Mr. Cradock, (Harm. p. ii. 256.) suppose the mistake of some Hellenist Jews, who did not understand the Syro-Chaldaic language; or whether it proceeded from his being raised so high, that, amidst the rude noise around him, they did not distinctly hear, I do not pretend to say. Perhaps the malice of those who did hear what he said, might misrepresent his words, to prevent any serious reflections on the Psalm from which they were taken, and to expose him to farther contempt.

complished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

drought, as the consequence of what he had so long endured both in mind and body, *that the scripture might be fulfilled*, (Psal. xxii. 15, and lxix. 21.) where the Messiah is described as crying out, "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and "in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," to shew that he endured all that had been foretold concerning him, *said, I thirst.* SECT. CXCI. John XIX. 28

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: [and straightway one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled *it* with vinegar,] and put it upon hyssop, [or a reed,] and put it to his mouth, [and gave him to drink.] [Mat. xxvii. 48. Mark xv. —36.]

MAT. XXVII. 49. The rest said, [Let alone,] let us see whether Elias will come to save him, [*and* take him down.] [Mark XV. 36.—]

Now there was set, as usual on such occasions, *a vessel full of vinegar* near the cross;[k] *and immediately* upon his mentioning his thirst, *one of them ran, and took a spunge, and filled* [*it*] *with* this *vinegar; and putting it round* [*a stalk of*] *hyssop*, which they had fastened *on* the top of *a* kind of cane, or large *reed, they put it* up *to his mouth, and* in a contemptuous manner *gave* it *him to drink. But the rest* of them that stood by, *said, Let* [*him*] *alone*, and *let us see whether Elijah*, whom he has just been calling upon, *will come and save him* from the cross; [*and*] indeed he must *take him down* quickly, if at all. So little were their hearts affected with this preternatural darkness, which had continued now three hours; and thus cruelly did they insult him, even in his expiring moments, which had been most inhuman, though he had really been the vilest malefactor. 29 Mat. xxvii. 49

JOHN XIX. 30.—When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, and thus had perfectly fulfilled the prophecies relating to his sufferings, *he said, It is finished*; the important work, for which I came into the world, is now completed, the demands of the law are satisfied, the justice of God is atoned, and my sufferings are now at an end. John xix. 30

LUKE XXIII. 46. And [when he had cried again with a loud voice,] he said, Father, into thy hands I commend

And crying out again with a great and *strong voice*, which plainly shewed that much of the strength of nature was yet in him; *he said*, with a lively faith, and holy joy, *Father*, for so I will still call thee, though that claim is thus derided by mine enemies, I am now coming to thee, and *into thy hands I commit my* departing *Spirit*, depositing it with thee as a sacred trust, which I am Luke xxiii. 46

[k] *A vessel full of vinegar.*] It is well known, that vinegar and water, (which mixture was called posca,) was the common drink of the Roman soldiers: perhaps therefore this vinegar was set here for their use, or for that of the crucified persons, whose torture would naturally make them thirsty.

SECT. CXCI. Luke XXIII. 46 confident thou wilt receive and keep. *And when he had said thus, declining his head, he* voluntarily *dismissed* or delivered up *his Spirit*, and expired.[l]

my Spirit: and having said thus, he [John, bowed his head, and] gave up the ghost.] [Mat. xxvii. 50. Mark xv. 37. John xix. 30.]

And behold, God by a very awful and miraculous interposition, avowed the relation which his Son claimed, and evidently appeared to take the charge of that dear and excellent Spirit which Jesus so solemnly recommended to him: for immediately upon his death, [*while*] *the sun was* still *darkened*, as was observed before, (ver. 45,) *the veil of the temple*, which separated between the holy, and the most holy place, though made of the richest and strongest tapestry, *was* miraculously *rent in two in the midst, from the top to the* very *bottom*; so that while the priest was ministering at the golden altar, it being the time of evening sacrifice, the sacred oracle was laid open to full view:[m] God thereby declaring, as it were, the abolition of the whole Mosaic ritual, which depended on a distinction between those two parts of the temple; and intimating that a passage was opened into the most holy

Mat. xxvii. 51

MAT. XXVII. 51. And behold [Luke, *while* the sun was darkened,] the veil of the temple was rent in twain, [Luke, *in the midst,*] from the top to the bottom;

[l] *He dismissed* or delivered up *his Spirit*, and expired.] The evangelists use different words in expressing our Lord's death, which I a little wonder that our translators render in the same manner, *he yielded*, or *gave up the Ghost*. Mark and Luke say, ἐξέπνευσε, *he expired*; John, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he yielded up his Spirit*; but Matthew's language is yet more singular, ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *he dismissed his Spirit*; (as the same word ἀφίημι is used, Mat. xiii. 36; Mark iv. 36; xi. 6, and elsewhere.) Now this expression seems admirably to suit our Lord's words, John x. 18. *No man taketh my life from me, but I lay it down of myself*, &c. (see the paraphrase and note there, p. 209.) shewing, as the strong cry which so much impressed the centurion did, that he died by the voluntary act of his own mind, according to the power received from the Father, and in a way peculiar to himself, by which he alone, of all men that ever existed, could have continued alive, even in the greatest tortures, as long as he pleased, or have retired from the body whenever he thought fit. Which view of the case, by the way, suggests an illustration of the love of Christ, manifested in his death, beyond what is commonly observed; inasmuch as he did not use this power to quit his body, as soon as ever it was fastened to the cross, leaving only an insensible corpse to the cruelty of his murderers, but continued his abode in it, with a steady resolution, as long as it was proper; and then retired from it with a majesty and dignity never known, or to be known, in any other death; *dying*, if I may so express it, *like the Prince of life*.

[m] While the priest was ministering at the golden altar, &c.] This being so high a day, it is probable that Caiaphas himself might now be performing the solemn act of burning incense just before the veil; which if he did, it is inexpressibly astonishing that his obdurate heart should not be impressed with so awful and significant a phenomenon. There is no room to doubt, but many of the other priests, who had a hand in Christ's death, saw the pieces of the veil; which, considering its texture, and the other circumstances, must as fully convince them of the reality of this extraordinary fact, as if they had actually been present when it was rent.

and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; [Mark xv. 38. Luke xxiii. 45.]

52 And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose.

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

SECT. CXCI. Mat. XXVII.

place by the blood of Jesus, which was now poured out on mount Calvary. *And* at the same time, to increase the terror, *the earth trembled* even to the very spot of ground on which the temple stood, *and* several of *the rocks* in the neighbouring parts *were torn asunder*:[n] *And* some of *the tombs* there *were opened* by the earthquake: *and*, which was much more astonishing, a little while after, while the monuments continued unclosed, *many bodies of* those *holy men who were sleeping* there, *were raised* from the dust of death,[o] *And came out of the tombs after the resurrection of* [*Jesus*], *and entered into* Jerusalem, *the holy city, and appeared unto many*;[p] attesting the truth of that important fact, and declaring their own rescue from the grave, as a kind of first fruits of his power over 52 53

[n] *The rocks were torn asunder.*] Mr. Fleming tells us, (in his Christology, Vol. II. p. 97, 98.) that a deist lately travelling through Palestine was converted, by viewing one of these rocks, which still remains *torn asunder*, not in the weakest place, but cross the veins; a plain proof that it was done in a supernatural manner—Sandys, in his excellent Travels, p. 164, has given an accurate description and delineation of this fissure; and Mr. Maundrel in his Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 73, 74, tells us, that it is about a span wide at the upper part, and two spans deep; after which it closes, but opens again below, (as may be seen in another chapel below, contiguous to the side of Calvary,) and runs down to an unknown depth in the earth. He adds, that every man's sense and reason must convince him, that this is a natural and genuine breach.

[o] *Many bodies of holy men were raised.*] That ingenious writer Mr. Fleming, who abounds with a vast number of peculiar conjectures, thinks that these were some of the most eminent saints mentioned in the Old Testament; and that they appeared in some extraordinary splendour, and were known by revelation, as Eve's original and relation was to Adam, or Moses and Elijah to the disciples at the transfiguration. He ventures particularly to conjecture who they were; but does not mention David among them. (Fleming of the first Resurrection, p. 29—38.) But Mr. Pierce (on Colos. p. 68,) maintains, that it is very improbable that, had other saints of former ages risen, David should have been excluded; and since Acts ii. 34, proves that he did not now rise, he concludes, that the saints who rose were some who died but a little before, perhaps such as had believed in Christ, and were well known to the surviving disciples. It was to be sure a most surprising event, and Dr. Whithy supposes, John v. 25. was a prophecy relating to it.

[p] *And came out of the tombs after the resurrection of Jesus*, &c.] Consequently it seems that the tombs stood open all the sabbath, when the law would not allow any attempt to close them. What an astonishing spectacle! especially if their resurrection was not instantaneously accomplished, but by such slow degrees, as that represented in Ezekiel's vision: (Ezek. xxxvii.) Yet I do not take upon me to say that it was so; for it is unprofitable too particularly to conjecture on such circumstances which are not recorded. For this reason also I pretend not to say what became of these persons; though as one can hardly imagine, they either immediately returned to their graves or that they continued to live on earth, (because it is only said, they appeared to many,) it seems most natural to imagine, they ascended into heaven with, or after, our Lord; perhaps from some solitude, to which they might be directed to retire during the intermediate days, and to wait in devout exercises for their change; for surely, had they ascended in the view of others, the memory of such a fact could not have been lost.

SECT. CXCI. death, which should at length accomplish a general resurrection.

Mark. XV. 39. *And when the* Roman *centurion, who stood over-against him*, and guarded the execution, *saw that he so cried out* with such strength of voice, *and* such firm confidence in God, even at the moment when he *expired*; [*and*] also *saw what was* [*then*] *done* in so miraculous a manner, in those amazing prodigies that attended his death; *he glorified God* by a free confession of his persuasion of the innocence of Jesus, *saying, Certainly this was a righteous man*; [*yea*], notwithstanding all the vile reproaches which have been cast upon him, *truly this man was* what he declared himself to be, even *the Son of God* himself. ¶ *And* the soldiers also that attended the centurion, even *they that were with him guarding Jesus* on the cross, *seeing the earthquake, and those* other *things which were* now *done, feared greatly, and said* in like manner, *Truly this* Jesus of Nazareth, whom we have been thus insulting and murdering, *was the Son of God*; and his heavenly Father will certainly avenge his quarrel very terribly on us, and on the whole nation of the Jews, who have delivered him to us.

Mat. xxvii. 54.

Luke, xxiii. 48. *And all the multitude*[r] *that were come together*, on this remarkable occasion, *to* see *this* doleful

Mark, XV. 39. And when the centurion which stood over-against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost [Luke: *and* saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man], truly this man was the Son of God. [Mat. xxvii. 54.—Luke xxiii. 47.]

Mat. XXVII.—54. And they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and those things that were done, *and* they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Luke XXIII. 48. And all the people that came together to

¶ *Certainly this was a righteous man, &c.*] The most learned Mr. Wasse of Aynho, (whose death since the publication of my first volume is an irreparable loss to the commonwealth of letters,) has a dissertation on these words of the centurion in the first number of the Bibliotheca Literaria, to which I am indebted for several hints in the paraphrase on these verses; but I have ventured to depart from him, in not entirely incorporating Mat. xxvii. 54, with Mark xv. 39, and Luke xxiii. 47, as the two latter only mention the effect of this surprising sight on the centurion, while Matthew gives us also an account of the effect it had upon the soldiers who very probably might repeat the words their officer had spoke but just before in expressing their sentiments on this occasion.—I shall only add, that Elsner, in a very learned note on this place, has shewn, that some of the Heathens had a notion among them, that prodigies, especially storms and earthquakes, sometimes attended the death of extraordinary persons, peculiarly dear to the gods; and among other passages, mentions that of Plutarch, in which he tells us, that when Ptolemy had crucified Cleomenes, while the body hung dead on the cross, a large serpent wound itself round his face, and defended it from birds of prey; from whence the Egyptians concluded, he was a hero more than mortal, and a son of the gods. See Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 126, 127.

[r] *All the multitude.*] That is, great multitudes; for it is no way necessary to suppose, that every individual person present was thus impressed. The conviction produced by these prodigies undoubtedly made way for the conversion of such a multitude by the preaching of the apostles, on the descent of the Spirit, which was but seven weeks after, when these things were fresh in their memories. Acts ii. 41.

that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.

spectacle, even some of those who but a little before had been insulting him in his dying agonies, *when they saw the things which were done, returned, beating their breasts* for sorrow and remorse; in terrible expectation that some sad calamity would speedily befall them and their country, for the indignities and cruelties they had offered to a person for whom God had expressed so high a regard, even in his greatest distress. SECT. CXCI. Luke XXIII. 48.

IMPROVEMENT.

And surely we, when we return from such a view of it as this, have reason to smite upon our breasts too, and to be most deeply affected with what we have heard and seen in this lively description. Let us set ourselves as with the mother of Jesus, and the beloved disciple, at the foot of the cross; and see whether *there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow, wherewith the Lord afflicted him in the day of his fierce anger:* (Lam. i. 12.) Well might the sun grow pale at the sight; well might the earth tremble to support it! How obdurate must the hearts of those sinners be who could make a mock of all his anguish, and sport themselves with his dying groans! But surely the blessed angels who were now, though in an invisible crowd, surrounding the accursed tree, beheld him with other sentiments; admiring and adoring the various virtues which he expressed in every circumstance of his behaviour; and which, while this sun of righteousness was setting, gilded and adorned all the horizon. Let us likewise pay our homage to them, and observe with admiration his tenderness to his surviving parent; his meekness under all these injuries and provocations; his steady faith in God in an hour of the utmost distress: and his concern to accomplish all the purposes of his life, before he yielded to the stroke of death. Luke xxiii. 46. John xix. 25, 26 Luke xxiii. 44, 45 Mat. xxvii. 49 John xix. 26, 27, 28—30.

Yet with what amazement must the holy angels hear that cry from the Son of God, from the darling of heaven, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!* Let not any of the children of God wonder if their heavenly Father sometimes withdraw from them the sensible and supporting manifestations of his presence, when Christ himself was thus exercised; and let them remember that faith never appears with greater glory than when, in language like this, it bursts through a thick cloud, and owns, *the God of Israel*, and *the Saviour*, even while *he is a God that hideth himself* from us, (Isa. xlv. 15.) May we, in our approaching combat with the king of terrors, find him enervated by the death of our dear Lord, who thus conquered even when he fell! May we thus breathe out our willing and composed spirits into our Mat. xxvii. 46. Luke xxiii. 46.

SECT. CXCI. Father's hands, with a language and faith like his, as *knowing whom we believed, and being persuaded that he is able to keep what we commit to him until that day!* (2 Tim. 1. 12.)

Mat. xxvii. 51—33 With pleasure, may we survey the awful tokens by which God owned his dying Son, and wiped away the infamy of his cross. The veil is now rent by the death of Jesus; let us be encouraged to *come boldly to the throne of grace*, and to draw near to *the holiest of all, into which he has entered with his own blood;* (Heb. iv. 16; ix. 12.) May God render the knowledge 54 of the cross of Christ the blessed means of shaking the consciences of men with powerful convictions, and of raising them from the death of sin, to a life of happiness! And may we be so *planted together in the likeness of his death*, that we may at length *also* be planted *in the likeness of his resurrection!* (Rom. vi. 5.)

SECT. CXCII.

While Christ continues hanging on the cross, his side is pierced, but his legs are not broken: Joseph begs the corpse, and lays it with respect in his sepulchre. Mat. XXVII. 35—61. Mark XV. 40, *to the end.* Luke XXIII. 29, *to the end.* John XIX. 31, *to the end.*

LUKE XXIII. 49.

SECT. CXCII. Luke XXIII. 49. AND while our Lord was thus expiring on the cross, *all his* familiar *acquaintance* mingled themselves with the crowd of spectators, and *stood at a distance, viewing these things* with weeping eyes and sympathizing hearts: *and* of this number there were *many* pious *women*,[a] *who had attended him when he was in Galilee, and* had there *ministered to him*, and liberally assisted him and his disciples with their substance; (compare Luke viii. 2, 3. Vol. I. p. 334, 335.) [*and*] *had* now *followed him from Galilee* to Jerusalem, where they had constantly attended on

Luke XXIII. 49. AND all his acquaintance, and [many] women, [Mark, who when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him, *and*] followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things: Matt xxvii. 55. Mark xv. 40—41.—]

[a] *Many* pious *women.*] I hope I shall give no offence by saying, what I am sure I say very seriously, that the frequent mention which is made in the evangelists of the generous and courageous zeal of some pious women in the service of Christ, and especially of the faithful and resolute constancy, with which they attended him in these last scenes of his suffering, might very possibly be intended to obviate that haughty and senseless contempt which the pride of men, often irritated by those vexations to which their own irregular passions have exposed them, has in all ages affected to throw on that sex which, probably in the sight of God, constitute by far the better half of mankind; and to whose care and tenderness, the wisest and best of men generally owe and ascribe much of the daily comfort and enjoyment of their lives.

SECT. CXCII. Mat. XXVII. 56

MAT. XXVII. 56. Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James [the less,] and [of] Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children, [and Salome, and many other women, which came up with him unto Jerusalem.] [Mark xv. 40, 41.]

his preaching in the temple, nor would they leave him in this great and last trial: *Among whom* there *was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses; and* there was also *the mother of* the apostles James and John, whom we have so often mentioned as *the sons of Zebedee* the fisherman;[b] *and Salome* also,[c] *and many other* zealous and affectionate *women, who came up with him to* this passover at *Jerusalem*, and who had the courage to attend him, even when his apostles themselves had forsaken him and fled.

JOHN XIX. 31. The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day (for that sabbath-day was an high-day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake

Then, as the day was drawing to a close, *the Jews* were very solicitous, *because it was* now *the preparation* for the sabbath, *that the bodies might not remain* all night *upon the cross*, which their law expressly forbade, (Deut. xxi. 22, 23;) and more especially, they were concerned that this profanation might not happen *on the sabbath-day, (for that sabbath*, being the first which followed the passover, *was a great day* of peculiar solemnity:[d]) they went therefore and *entreated Pilate* that he would send an order to the soldiers, who were watching the crucified persons, *that their legs might be broken*, the more effectually to dispatch them, if they were not quite dead, *and* [*that*] *they might* then *be taken away*.[e] And Pilate upon this gave orders that it should accordingly be done: *the soldiers there-* John xix. 31. 32

[b] *And the mother of the sons of Zebedee.*] Though the construction of the original be dubious, yet I think it very rational to conclude, that this mother of the sons of Zebedee, or of James the greater and John, was a different person from the mother of James the less and Joses; both as the sons of Zebedee, though such distinguished friends of Christ are never called his brethren, as James and Joses are, (Mat. xiii. 55; and Mark vi. 3, Vol. I. p. 403.) and as some scriptures plainly intimate, that no more than two of the apostles were the sons of Zebedee.—See Mat. x. 2; xxvi. 37; Mark iii. 17.

[c] *And Salome.*] This Salome, who is mentioned here by Mark, is commonly supposed to be the mother of Zebedee's children mentioned by Matthew: but as it is expressly said, there were many other women present, she might possibly be some other disciple, and there is no sufficient reason to conclude they were the same. (Compare Mark xvi. 1.)

[d] *For that sabbath was a great day.*] It was, (as Dr. Whitby in his paraphrase has well observed,) not only a sabbath, but the second day of the feast of unleavened bread, from whence they reckoned the weeks to pentecost; and also the day for presenting and offering the sheaf of new corn: so that it was indeed a treble solemnity.—(See note [b] on Luke vi. 1, Vol. I. p. 280.)

[e] *Might be taken away.*] It was customary, as Bishop Pearson (on the Creed, p. 218.) has abundantly proved, to let the bodies of persons who had been executed, continue on the crosses, or stakes, till they were eaten up by birds of prey; but as this was forbidden to the Jews, the Roman governors probably used to oblige them by permitting such bodies as belonged to them to be buried.

SECT. CXCII. John XIX. 32

fore, who guarded the execution, *came and brake the legs of the first* malefactor, or of him that hung nearest the place where they had been sitting: *and* then passing by Jesus, who hung in the middle, they went and brake the legs *of* 33 *the other who was crucified with him. But coming* afterwards *to Jesus, they did not break his legs, as they saw* it was needless, since it was plain *he was already dead;* and they were now impressed with some degree of reverence even to his corpse, by the amazing prodigies which 34 they had just now seen. *But* yet *one of the soldiers* had so much boldness and inhumanity, that he *pierced his side with a* long lance or *spear*, which he had in his hand; *and immediately there came out* of the wound both *blood and water* mingled with it;[f] which made it plainly appear that, had he been living, the wound would have been mortal, having reached his very heart; and consequently put it out of all doubt that he was really dead, before he was taken down from the cross.

35 *And* as this was so important, and indeed so fundamental a point,[g] it may not be improper to add, that it was *one who saw* [*it*] who *has bore* [*this*] *testimony*, and recorded so remarkable a circumstance; *and* therefore *his witness is* undoubtedly *true; and* now he is writing this, he solemnly declares that *he knows*, by the most certain testimony of his senses, *that what he saith is true;* and he makes this declaration, *that you*, whoever you are, into whose hands this history may come sooner or later, *may believe*, and may be confirmed in your adherence to that gospel which is established on the death and resurrection of Christ.

the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs.

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water.

35 And he that saw it, bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

[f] *There came out blood and water.*] I do not pretend to determine whether this was, as Dr. Drake supposes, (in his Anatomy, Vol. I. p. 106.) the small quantity of water inclosed in the pericardium, in which the heart swims; or whether the cruor was now almost coagulated, and separated from the serum: either way, it was a certain proof of Christ's death; for he could not have survived such a wound had it been given him in perfect health.

[g] So important and fundamental a point.] The grand evidence of Christ's mission in his resurrection, which implies the certainty of his death: and thus crucifixion might have seemed, on a slight view, a less proper execution than some others, such as beheading, burning, and the like; but this wound would effectually exclude all pretences of his having been taken down alive by his friends; and accordingly that is an evasion which, false and malicious as his enemies were, we do not find they ever had recourse to.

SECT. CXII.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

For, however inconsiderable *these things* may appear, they *were* permitted in the course of Divine Providence to be *done, that* thus *the scripture might be* remarkably *fulfilled*, in what it says concerning the paschal lamb, which did in so many circumstances resemble Christ, (Exod. xii. 46, and Numb. ix. 12.) "*Not a bone of it shall be broken:*"[h] a precept which among many others, was given on purpose to lead the minds of believers to reflect on the harmony and unity of design carried on (though by such a variety of persons, in no concert with each other) under the Old Testament and under the New. John XIX. 36.

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

And again, there is *another scripture*, which *says* concerning the Jews, when they are to be converted to the Messiah in the latter days, "*They shall look on him whom they have pierced*," (Zech. xii. 10;) for which reason God permitted them not only to pierce the hands and the feet of Jesus with nails, but also to open his side by that deep and large wound which we have now been mentioning. 37

MARK XV. 42. And now [John, after this] when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath; [Mat. xxvii. 57.—John xix. 38.—]

And quickly *after these things, as* it was near sun-set, and *the evening was now come, because* (as we have observed) *it was the preparation, or* the close of *the day before the sabbath*, (John xix. 31.) for it was Friday evening, and the sabbath, which would begin at six o'clock, was near at hand, in which no work could lawfully be done; Mark xv. 42.

LUKE XXIII. 50. Behold [there came a rich man of Arimathea,] [Luke, a city of the Jews,] named Joseph, [Mark, an honourable counsellor, *[and he was* a good man, and a just: [Mat xxvii.—57.—*Mark* xv. 43.—*Luke xxiii. 51.*—]

Behold, there came to the governor's palace *a* certain *rich man of Arimathea, (a city of the Jews*, anciently called Ramoth, which lay in the tribe of Ephraim, and was the city of Samuel, that celebrated prophet,) and he was *named Joseph*, and was a person of considerable note, *being an honourable counsellor*, or member of the sanhedrim, who had a general reputation as *a benevolent and upright man.* Luke xxiii. 50

—51 The same *The same* was not concerned with the rest of his fellow senators in putting Jesus to death, 51

[h] *Not a bone of it shall be broken.*] Dr. Arthur Young, (in his Historical Dissertation on Revelation designed to prevent Superstition, Vol. I. p. 196, 203, 204.) has a particular thought on the reason of this prohibition, that it was intended to oppose the manner in which the Egyptian sacrifices were sometimes pulled to pieces: but I think the reason suggested in the paraphrase much more certain and important. It is very well illustrated in An Essay on the several dispensations of God, &c. Pref. p. xxii. *&c seq.*

SECT. CXCII. Luke XXIII.

and *had not given* the concurrence of *his vote to* *the counsel and action of them* that condemned him; [*but was one*] *who also himself* humbly and affectionately *waited for the kingdom of*
51 *God, being* indeed *a disciple of Jesus, though* *secretly;* because he durst not openly profess his belief in him *for fear of the Jews* and their rulers, who were so strongly prejudiced against
52 him. *This man*, awakened by the prodigies attending his death to greater courage than he had before, though he knew it must necessarily draw upon him the hatred and contempt of his brethren, yet *went in boldly to* the presence of *Pilate*,[1] *and begged* his permission *that he might take away the body of Jesus*, to preserve it from farther insults, and bury it in a decent and respectful manner.

had not consented to the counsel and deed of them: [*but was one*] who also himself waited for the kingdom of God, [John, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews.] [Mat. xxvii.—57. Mark xv.—43—John xix.—38.—]

52 This man went [Mark, in boldly] unto Pilate, and begged [John, that he might take away the body of Jesus.]—[Mat. xxvii. 58.—Mark xv. 43. John xix.—38.—]

Mark xv. 44.

And when *Pilate* heard his request, considering how lingering an execution that of the cross was, he *thought it strange if he were already dead*, and would not easily believe it; *and* therefore, *having called the centurion to him*, who was appointed to guard the bodies, *he asked him*
45 *whether he had been dead any time. And when* *he knew* [*it*] *of the centurion*, and was certainly informed that, besides all the appearances of his having been dead before, he was afterwards stabbed to the very heart, *Pilate*, without any farther scruple, *gave him leave*, [*and*] *commanded the body to be delivered to Joseph:* which he might be the more willing to do, as he was thoroughly convinced that Jesus was innocent; and it was generally thought by the heathens, that the spirits of the departed received some advantage from the honours of a funeral paid to their bodies.

MARK XV. 44. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead; and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him, whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, [John, Pilate gave him leave,] [*and* commanded the body to be delivered] to Joseph. [Mat. xxvii.—58. John xix.—38.—]

46 *And Joseph therefore*, being thus authorized by Pilate, *having bought* a large piece of *fine linen*, *came* to mount Calvary, *and* with proper assistance *took down the body of Jesus* from the cross, *and wrapped it* up *in a* kind of winding-sheet of *clean linen cloth.*

46—And [Joseph] bought fine linen, and [John, came therefore, and] took down [John, the body of Jesus,] and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.] [Mat. xxvii. 59.—Luke xxiii. 53.—John xix.—38.]

[1] *Went in boldly to Pilate.*] It was indeed a courageous act for this rich and noble senator thus publicly to own his friendship to Jesus in the midst of his greatest infamy; and a person of such sagacity could not but know that, if a resurrection should happen, nothing would have been more natural, than that he should have been brought into question as a confederate in the pretended fraud of conveying him away.

SECT. CXCII.

JOHN XIX. 39. And there came also Nicodemus, (which at the first came to Jesus by night,) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*.

And there came also at the same time with Joseph to the cross, *Nicodemus*, another member of the sanhedrim, of whom repeated mention has been made in the preceding story, and *who* was he that *at the first* beginning of his public ministry *came to Jesus by night*, (John iii. 1, 2.) *and*, as he was now grown more courageous than before, to testify his great regard for Jesus, he *brought* with him *a mixture of myrrh and aloes, [that weighed] about an hundred pounds.* To prepare *then* for his interment, *they took the body of Jesus*, without regarding the reproach to which it might expose them, *and swathed it up in* a great many folds of *linen*,[k] together *with the spices (according to the Jewish custom of burying,)* intending to embalm it in a more exact manner, as soon as the sabbath was over; and hoping that in the mean time the spices lying near the body might preserve it from the least taint of corruption.

John XIX. 39

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

40

41—Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore [in *Joseph's* own new tomb, which he had hewn, [Luke, in stone,] [Mark, out of a rock,] [John, wherein was never man yet laid:] because [Luke, that day was the] Jews [Luke, preparation, and the sabbath drew on;] for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. [Mat. xxvii. 60. Mark xv. —46.—Luke xxiii. —53, 54. John xix. —41.]

Now it happened very commodiously for his immediate interment, that *in the* very neighbourhood of the *place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre* belonging to Joseph. *There laid they Jesus therefore in [Joseph's] own new tomb, which he had* lately ordered to be *hewn in stone out of a* solid *rock*; to which therefore there could be no passage but by the door, and *in which no man was ever yet laid*, so that there could be no room to imagine any other person rose from thence. And this they did without first carrying the body into any house to embalm it; *because* (as we have said before) *it was the Jewish preparation-day, and the sabbath drew on*, which did not allow their undertaking a work of so much labour and time: to be ready therefore for the rest commanded on the sabbath-day, they used no farther ceremony in interring him, and chose a most convenient place to do it with dispatch, *for the sepulchre*

41

42

[k] *Swathed up in linen.*] This I take to be the most literal translation of the words ἐδησαν αὐτὸ σινδόσι; for σινδὼν were a kind of *linen rollers*, in which, as Elsner has shewn, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 347.) the easterns swathed up their dead. It was, no doubt, by miracle, that when Christ arose, he disentangled himself from these swathes.

SECT. CXCII. Mat. XXVII. 60

was very *near at hand*. And Joseph having thus interred him in his own tomb, and so (as it was prophesied concerning the Messiah, Isa. liii. 9.) "made his grave with the rich in his "death,"[1] he took care to make all things secure, *and having rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre*, to block up the entrance, *he went away* to his own home.

Mat. XXVII. 60. And he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed. [Mark xv.—46.]

Luke xxiii. 55

And when Joseph and Nicodemus came, and took down Jesus from the cross, *Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary*, who (as was said before) was *the mother of* James the less and *Joses*, (Mat. xxvii. 56, p. 559.) *and* the rest of *the women also who came with him from Galilee*, and so affectionately attended during the time of his crucifixion, were now desirous to see how they disposed of him; and therefore when they carried off the corpse, these pious women *followed after* them, *and sitting over against the sepulchre*, into which they saw them enter, *beheld* with diligent observation *where and how his body was laid*.

Luke XXIII. 55. [And Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary,] [Mark, the mother of Joses, [and the women also which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and [sitting over against the sepulchre,] beheld [Mark, where] and how his body was laid. [Mat. xxvii. 61. Mark xv. 47.]

56 And perceiving that they did not embalm him, but only wound him up in linen with the dry spices, they resolved to perform this last office of duty and affection to him in the completest and most respectful manner they could; *and* therefore *they* immediately *returned* into the city, *and* before the day of preparation was quite finished, they *provided* a great quantity of *spices and balms* for that purpose, that nothing might prevent them from engaging in it as soon as the first day of the week should open; *and*, in the mean time, they *rested on the sabbath-day, according to the* Divine *command-*

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath-day according to the commandment.

[1] Made his grave with the rich in his death.] Let me here be permitted to mention the criticism of a celebrated divine on this passage of Isaiah, which having never (that I know of) been published, may be new to many, as it was to me. Observing that the word רשעים may be *the dual number*, and that עשיר is *the singular*, he would suppose a kind of *hendiadys* in the construction, and render it, "*His death and burial shall be with two criminals and with one rich man*; that is, "after having expired between two malefactors, a rich man (that is Joseph "of Arimathea,) shall undertake the care "of his funeral."—But I must acknowledge that no version of the words pleases me so well on the whole as that of Dr. Sykes, which I read since I wrote the paraphrase above. ויתן *Nevertheless he shall avenge* or recompense *his grave upon the wicked, and his death upon the rich*: or, which is equivalent to the former, but perhaps more exact, *He shall avenge his grave* (that is, his death which brings *him* down to it) *on the wicked, and on the rich when he dies*, במותיו. See Dr. Sykes on the Truth of Christianity, p. 256.

ment, which they would not violate even on so solemn an occasion as this. SECT. CXCII.

IMPROVEMENT.

WE have seen the sorrows of our expiring Lord: let us now, like these pious women, raise our eyes to him with an holy and unfeigned affection, and behold him pale and breathless on the accursed tree. Let us view him by faith, till the eye affects the heart, and till we learn to *glory in nothing but his cross, whereby the world* may be *crucified to us, and we* may be crucified *to the world.* (Gal. vi. 14.) Mat. xxvii. 55,56

How wonderfully does the providence of God appear to have regarded the body of Jesus, which had so long been the temple of the indwelling Deity; even when it was deserted of that spirit which had lately animated it; and while it hung (amazing thought, that it ever should have hung!) between the bodies of two thieves on a cross, without the gates of Jerusalem! He, who has all hearts in his hand, interposed by a secret, but powerful influence on the soldiers, who brake the legs of the malefactors, to spare those of Christ; that so nothing which looked like a prophecy of him, should want its proper accomplishment. But his side was pierced; and how deep was the wound, when immediately there came out of it blood and water! Happy emblem of the blessed effect of his death! *He came* both *by water and blood*, (as *he who saw and testified* this important fact leads us to improve it; 1 John v. 6); and by this means at once atones the injured justice of God, and purifies the souls of them that believe in him. John xix. 31-32 33,36 34 35

Our indignation rises against the man that could, by such an outrage at this, abuse the dead body of our Redeemer; but oh, let us seriously remember the hand which our sins had in all that was now done. *He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities:* (Isa. liii. 5.) And therefore it is said concerning those *on whom the ends of the world are to come*, that *they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn;* (Zech. xii. 10.) May we mourn over him with a genuine evangelical sorrow, when we consider whom we have pierced; and how deep and how often we have pierced him; and upon what slight temptations; and under how many engagements, rather to have bathed his wounds with our tears, and even to have exposed our own hearts to the sharpest weapon, by which the madness of sinners might have attempted to injure him. 37

The boldness of Joseph, and even of Nicodemus himself, deserves our notice on such an occasion. They are not ashamed of the infamy of his cross, but come with all holy reverence and affection to take down those sacred remains of Jesus; nor did they think the finest linen, or the choicest spices, too valu- Mark xv. 43. John xix. 39. Mark xv. 46.

SECT. CCII. John XIX. 40 Mat. xxvii. 60

able on such an occasion. But who can describe their consternation and distress, when they saw him, who they trusted should have delivered Israel, a cold and bloody corpse in their arms; and left him in the sepulchre of Joseph, whom they expected to have seen on the throne of David?—We leave for the present his enemies in triumph, and his friends in tears, till his resurrection; which soon confounded the rage of the former, and revived the hopes of the latter; hopes which must otherwise have been for ever entombed under that stone with which they now covered him. But happy and comfortable is the thought, that this his transient visit to the grave has (as it were) left a perfume in the bed of dust, and reconciled the believer to dwelling a while in the place where the Lord lay!

SECT. CXCIII.

Judas confessing his guilt, returns the money he had received from the chief priests, and then hangs himself. The Jews the next day demand, and procure a guard to be set on Christ's sepulchre. Mat. XXVII. 3—10. 62, *to the end.*

MAT. XXVII. 3.

SECT. CXCIII. Mat. XXVII. 3

HAVING thus finished the account of the death of Jesus, it may be convenient here to mention the miserable end of that perfidious disciple by whom he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies. The Jewish rulers having delivered Jesus to the Roman governor, and having prevailed upon him to give orders for his execution, *then Judas, who had betrayed him, when he saw* to his surprise *that he was condemned* by Pilate, and that they were leading him forth to die upon the cross, to which he seemed determined to submit, though he could so easily have rescued himself from it,[a]

MAT. XXVII. 3.

THEN Judas which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself,

[a] *Then Judas,* &c.] For the proper place of this story, which is here inserted out of its order, see note [a] on John xix. 16. p. 536. Matthew has introduced it immediately after the Jews had delivered Jesus to Pilate; but after this the Jews were so intent on persuading Pilate to consent to his death, that there was hardly time for the sanhedrim's adjourning to the temple, where this occurence happened, before they had prevailed with Pilate to condemn him: and as Judas must have often heard his Master say he should be crucified, Pilate's order for his execution must have more sensibly affected him, than the Jews passing sentence on him, who had not then the power of putting any one to death.—The word τοτε, *then*, with which the evangelist begins this story, may be taken in some latitude to introduce the mention of an occurrence which happened about that time, whether a little before or after, and need not be interpreted with so much rigour, as to determine it to an assertion of observing the exactest order in all circumstances. See note [a] on Mat. xxvii. 27, p. 525.

SECT. CXCIII.

Mat. XXVII. 3

and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

was seized with great terror and agony of conscience; and *repenting* of the fatal bargain he had made, whereby he had brought such a load of guilt on his own soul, he *carried back the thirty pieces of silver* which they had given him, *to the chief-priests and the elders*, while they were together in the temple that morning: for they resorted thither with a specious appearance of piety, before they followed the multitude to Calvary to see the execution. *And* coming in among them in a wild disorder, he *said* to them, Oh Sirs! *I have sinned* in a most desperate manner, *in that I have betrayed innocent blood* to you; for I am well convinced, that Jesus my Master has done nothing to deserve this punishment to which you have delivered him; and I am not able to bear the thought of the concern I have had in it. *And they answered* with the steady coolness of those who knew no shame or remorse for their wickedness, *What* [*is that*] *to us*, whether thou thinkest him innocent or not? *See thou* [*to that*]: it is sufficient for us that we know he is guilty, whether such a wretch as thou art, approvest or condemnest our sentence. *And throwing down the pieces of silver* money *in the temple*, in their very presence, with all the marks of agony and distress, *he withdrew; and going away* to the brow of a hill, in some retired and melancholy place, *he* there *hanged himself*; but the rope breaking by the force with which he threw himself off, he fell down the precipice, and burst asunder with the force of his fall, so that all his bowels gushed out; [b] and he lay expiring, in a most painful and terrible manner, a spectacle of horror to all that beheld him, alive, or dead, as a multitude of spectators did. (Compare Acts i. 18, 19.)

4 Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

[b] *And going away, he hanged himself;* but the rope breaking, &c.] This method which Mr. Le Clerc, (Harm. p. 527,) and several other learned critics have taken, of reconciling Matthew with what is afterwards said of this fact, (Acts i. 18.) that *falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out*; appears to me much preferable to that of those who would render απαγξαλε, *he was stifled*, or *suffocated, with excess of grief*, (see La Motte of Inspir. p. 155); a version, which none of the authorities I have seen, seem sufficient to justify. Nor is it necessary to suppose with Dr. Lightfoot, (Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xxvii. 5, and Acts i. 18.) that Judas was carried away by the devil, and strangled in the air, and being thrown from thence in the sight of all the city, was dashed in pieces by the violence of the fall.

SECT. CXCIII. Mat. XXVII.

And the chief priests, taking up *the pieces of silver,* were at some loss how they should dispose of them: for they *said, It is not lawful* for us *to put them into the* chest which is called Corban, 6 or the sacred *treasury, because it is the price of blood,* and would in effect be offering to God the life of a man. And these hypocrites scrupled such a point of ceremony, while they still persisted in their resolution to destroy Jesus, which, if they had desired it, they might yet 7 have prevented. *But* afterwards, when they met in a body about some other business, *having consulted together* what they should do with those pieces of money, *they bought with them* that close in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem which is called *The potters field,*[c] *for a burying-place of foreigners* who had no sepulchres of their own, and whose bodies they scrupled to 8 lay with those of their own holy nation. And *therefore,* by the way, *that field was called,* in the Syriac language, Aceldama, that is, *The field of blood;* (Acts i. 19.) and it bears that name even *to this day,* because it was purchased with that money which was the price paid for the blood of Jesus, and was in effect the purchase of the blood of Judas too.

9 *Then was that fulfilled* in a very remarkable manner, *which was spoken by the prophet,*[d]

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potters field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, the field of blood, unto this day.

9 (Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the

[c] *The potters field.*] Thirty pieces of silver may seem a very inconsiderable price for a field so near Jerusalem; but as Grotius well observes, the ground was probably much spoiled by digging it up for earth to make potters vessels; so that it was now unfit for tillage or pasture, and consequently of small value.

[d] *Which was spoken by the prophet.*] Most copies read it, *by Jeremiah the prophet;* yet it is universally known, that these words are found no where in Jeremiah, but in Zechariah, (chap. xi. 13.) it appears to me very unnatural to say with Dr. Lightfoot (Hor. Heb. in loc.) that all the prophetic writings might be called the book of Jeremiah; because in ancient times the prophecy of Jeremiah was put at the beginning of the volume of the prophets: nor would the granting this fact account for the expression of its being spoke by him. Nor am I at all convinced by Mr. Joseph Mede's reasonings, (see his Works, p. 965.) that these words, though recorded by Zechariah, or rather found in his book, were originally spoken by Jeremiah, and by some accident displaced: a principle on which the whole credit of the prophecies might be destroyed. It would be a much less dishonour to the sacred writings, to suppose a small error in the pen of some early transcriber, who might, (as Bishop Hall prettily conjectures,) by the mistake of one letter only, (supposing the word to be contracted,) write Ιρμ for Ζρκ. And though it is certain, that Jeremiah was the received reading, as early as Origen's time, yet there is room to doubt, whether any prophet was named in the first copies, as the Syriac version, which is allowed to be made in the most early times, says only, *It was spoken by the prophet,* without mentioning by whom. On the whole, I think it more respectful to the evangelist, to suppose that some officious transcriber might either insert or change the prophet's name, than to impute it, as Dr.

prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value.

(Zech. xi. 13.) *saying*, "*And I took the thirty pieces of silver*" (which sum, the reader will observe, was *the* usual *price of one who was sold* for a slave, or of one *whom the children of Israel did sell*, being esteemed among them on an average but the equitable price of such a one; and was here the price of the blood of the Son of God himself, that infinitely valuable Person:)[e] "*And they were given for the potters* "*field, as* (saith the prophet,) *the Lord com-* "*manded me* in vision, in token of his just dis- "pleasure against those who had put such an "affront on his pastoral care."[f]

SECT. CXCIII. Mat. XXVII. 9

10 And gave them for the potters field, as the Lord appointed me.)

10

Mill seems to do, to a slip in the author's memory.

[e] *The price of one who was sold*, &c.] We may either render the words τὸν τετιμημένον, ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ, *of one who was sold*, even of one *whom the children of Israel did sell*; and so consider them as expressive of the common price a slave was rated at among them: or we may render them, of him that was sold, or valued, (even their own Messiah,) whom the very children of Israel sold at this shameful price. And I think, either of these versions would suit the original, and convey a lively and proper sense; I have therefore suggested both in the paraphrase, though in the version, which could not well be equally ambiguous, I have preferred the former.

[f] *And they were given for the potters field, as the Lord commanded me.*] It is plain, these words are not exactly quoted, either from the Hebrew, or the Septuagint; yet I cannot think the difference so great as it at first appears; since those words in the parenthesis (τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου, ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ,) which are not in either, may be considered as the words of the evangelist himself, (to which he was naturally led by those of the prophet, *A goodly price that I was prized at of them*;) and if, which might easily happen, ἔδωκαν be written for ἔδωκα, as ἔλαβον is ambiguous, it may be rendered yet nearer to the original, *I took—and gave them*, &c. As for the general propriety of applying these words to this occasion, I think it may well be vindicated; for the connection and sense of the prophecy in the Old Testament seems to be this. In order to represent to Zechariah the contempt which Israel put upon their God, he had a vision to the following purpose. He thought God first appointed him to appear among them as a shepherd; (making him by that emblem a representation of himself:) after some time, he directs him to go to the rulers of Israel, and ask them, What they thought he deserved for his labour in that office? They gave him the price of a slave, thirty pieces of silver; and this in the house of the Lord, where the court sat. On this, God, as resenting the indignity offered to him in the person of his prophet, orders him to throw it down with disdain before the first poor labourer he met, who happened to be a potter at work by the temple gates, as a fitter price for a little of his paltry ware, than a suitable acknowledgment of the favours they had received from God. Now surely, if there was ever any circumstance in which the children of Israel behaved themselves so as to answer this visionary representation, it must be when they gave this very sum of thirty pieces of silver as a price for the life of that very Person whom God had appointed their great Shepherd. And, in order to point out the correspondence the more sensibly, Providence so ordered it, that the person to whom this money went, should be a potter; though the prophecy would have been answered if he had been a fuller, or of any other profession. It may also be farther observed, that God's ceasing to be the Shepherd of Israel, which was represented by the prophet's breaking his pastoral staves, was never fully answered till their final rejection after the death of Christ; which may farther lead us to refer the affront of their giving the pieces of silver to this event.—I do not remember ever to have

SECT. CXCIII. Mat. XXVII.

But to return *now* to the main story. When, notwithstanding the confession of Judas, the Jews had crucified Christ, and his friends had taken down his body from the cross, and laid it
62 in Joseph's tomb on the evening of the sixth day of the week, *on the morrow*, or on the sabbath itself, *which followed the day of preparation, the chief priests, and* other *Pharisees* who belonged to the grand sanhedrim, *assembled together* in a body *to* wait upon *Pilate*, as with an
63 address of solemn importance: *Saying, Sir, we remember that this* notorious *deceiver*, who was yesterday put to death for his crimes, and is well known to have practised many arts to impose upon the people *while he was yet living, said, After three days I will rise again* from the
64 dead:[g] We desire *therefore*, that since his friends have been entrusted with the care of interring him, thou wouldst *order that the sepulchre* where he is laid may *be* strictly guarded and *secured till the third day* is past; *lest his disciples* should *come by night and steal him away, and* upon this should *tell the people* that, according to his own prediction, *he is risen from the dead: and* so *the last deceit will be worse than the first*, and the deluded populace will be more eager to profess their regard to him after his death, than they ever were while he was living.

65 *And Pilate said to them, You have a guard* in waiting about your court in the temple: *go your way* therefore, and order as many of them as you think fit, to march to the sepulchre, and to keep centry there all night, and thereby *make* [*it*] *as secure as you* possibly *can*.

66 *And* accordingly *they went* and took a detachment of soldiers with them to the garden of Joseph; *and* having first satisfied themselves that the corpse was there,[h] they *secured the se-*

MAT. XXVII. 62. Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate.

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, ye have a watch, go your way, make *it* as sure as you can.

66 So they went and made the sepul-

seen this matter set in, what seems to me, its just and most natural light; but Grotius has some valuable hints upon it, which I wonder he did not pursue farther.

[g] *After three days I will rise again.*] Their intending to make the sepulchre secure only till the third day ended, shewed, that they understood our Lord's expression of rising after three days, to be (as indeed it was,) equivalent to a declaration that he would rise on the third day. See note [f] on Mat. xii. 40, Vol. I. p. 347. Compare also Deut. xiv. 28, with xxvi. 12.

[h] Having first satisfied themselves that the corpse was there.] Common prudence

chre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

pulchre as well as they possibly could, *sealing the stone*, that it might not be broke open without a discovery of the fraud;[i] *and* also *setting a guard* near it, who took care to place themselves so, that they could not but take an immediate alarm, if any had presumed to make the least attempt to open the sepulchre, and remove the body, or even to embalm it.

SECT. CXCIII. Mat. XXVII. 66

IMPROVEMENT.

In how fatal a manner does the way of transgressors deceive them! Judas, no doubt, but a few hours before, was thinking with eager impatience of receiving this sum of money, which was the wages of unrighteousness: but though he might for a little while roll it as a sweet morsel under his tongue, yet how soon was it *turned* into *the gall of asps within him?* (Job xx. 12—14.) Mat. xxvii. 3.

We see the force of conscience, even in the worst of men. He that had slighted all the warnings that his Master gave him, and neither was affected by the remembrance of his goodness to him, nor by the fear of his displeasure, while he was set upon accomplishing his covetous design, no sooner comes to feel the sting of an awakened conscience, but he is filled with horror, and 5

would teach them to do this; and perhaps they might feed their cruelty with viewing the dead body, as Herodias did with that sad spectacle, the baptist's head. See note[q] on Mark vi. 28, Vol. I. page 427.

[i] *Sealing the stone.*] Some have conjectured, they might also cement it with lead, or *bind it with iron*; but the sabbath would hardly have allowed this. The guard would prevent violence; and the seal would be a security against any fraud of theirs in confederacy with the disciples, if that could possibly have been suspected. I have also hinted in the paraphrase above, that this precaution of sealing the sepulchre might prevent any attempt, not only to remove the body, but to embalm it. For it is to be considered, that they had great reason to believe, that when two such eminent persons as Joseph and Nicodemus had already paid such a public honour to the corpse they would desire also to embalm it; which accordingly they did really design. This would be such an additional reflection on the proceedings of the sanhedrim, as they would certainly desire to prevent. A mandate from Pilate for this purpose they could not be sure of obtaining had they asked it; nor would an act of their own court have been free from uncertainty and inconvenience. This method of sealing the stone was therefore the most artful expedient that could be imagined; which would effectually prevent it, without letting it be publicly known that they had the least suspicion of any such design. I state the matter thus largely, in regard to one of the most learned persons of the age, who seems to think this a very considerable difficulty.—But with respect to the principal point of his rising from the dead, it is surely most senseless to say, with that wretched opposer of the miracles of Christ, who has brought upon himself such just infamy, that this sealing the stone intimated a contract between Christ and them, that he should rise in the sight of the Jewish rulers on the third day. Probably their design was on the fourth day to have opened the sepulchre, and have exposed the corpse to public view; which had it been in their power, had been the most prudent step they could have taken.—But they do not seem to have been mad enough to think, that if Jesus rose from the dead, it must be just when they thought fit to attend.

SECT. CXCIII. is unable to endure, the cutting anguish of his own reflections. And thus could God, in a moment, drive the most hardened sinner into all the agonies of remorse and despair, by letting loose his own thoughts upon him, to prey upon his heart like so many hungry vultures, and make him a terror to others, and an executioner to himself.

Ver. 4 We must surely admire the wisdom of Providence, in extorting even from the mouth of this traitor so honourable a testimony of the innocence of Jesus, though to his own condemnation. And who could have imagined that the supreme court of Israel itself should have been so little impressed with it, as coldly to answer, *What is that to us? See thou to that.* Is this the language of rulers, yea, of priests? But they had cast off the fear of that God whose ministers they were, and had devoted themselves to gain and ambition. They therefore felt no remorse, even when Judas trembled before them, and appeared almost distracted, under the sense of a crime in which they had been confederates with him. But their consciences were seared as with a red hot iron, and all their familiar converse with Divine things served only, in such a circumstance, to harden their hearts: as tempered steel gathers strength from the furnace and the hammer.

5 Judas repents; he confesses his crime; he throws away the reward of his guilt: yet was there nothing of godly sorrow in all this. Despairing, he becomes his own executioner; and flies to death, and to hell, as a refuge from the rage and fury of an awakened conscience. Fatal expedient! thus to seal his own damnation! But the righteous judgment of God erected him as a monument of wrath, and verified our Saviour's declaration, *It had been good for that man if he had never been born.* (Mat. xxvi. 24; and Mark xiv. 21, sect. clxx.) Tremble, O our souls, at this thought; that Judas, even one of the twelve, should fall into such depths of sin and ruin! May we each of us be jealous over ourselves; and may we never presume to censure whole bodies of men for the fault of particular members, when we find there was a traitor and reprobate among the holy band of the apostles.

63,64 We see the restless and implacable malice of Christ's enemies, which pursued him even to his tomb, and there endeavoured to blast his memory by fixing upon him the character of an impostor.

65,66 They demanded, and procured a guard for his sepulchre. And here also we have a repeated instance of God's *taking the wise in their own craftiness;* (Job v. 13.) The seal and the guard served only more fully to attest the doctrine of Christ's resurrection, which they were set to overthrow, and to grace the triumph they were intended to oppose. Thus shall all the rage, and all the artifice of his enemies, at length promote the purposes of his glory: thus shall *meat* at length *come out of the eater, and sweetness out of the strong;* Judg. xiv. 14.)

The wrath of man, O Lord, *shall praise thee;* and *the remainder of it shalt thou restrain;* and shalt triumph over it, either by thy grace, or by thy vengeance; (Psal. lxxvi. 10.) SECT. CXCIII.

SECT. CXCIV.

Christ rising from the dead, the guards flee away in astonishment; Mary Magdalene finding the sepulchre open, calls Peter and John, who having entered into it, return; while Christ himself makes his first appearance to her. Mat. XXVIII. 1—4. Mark XVI. 1, 2, 3, 4. Luke XXIV. 1, 2. 12. John XX. 1—17.

MARK XVI. 1.

MARK XVI. 1. AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and [the other Mary,] *the mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. [Mat. xxviii. 1—]

AND when the sabbath was over,[a] which ended in the evening, (as was often observed before, *Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary,* who was [*the mother*] *of James* and Joses, *and Salome,* with Joanna, and some other pious women,[b] were so intent on embalming the body of Jesus, that they had another consultation about it; and, not satisfied with the preparation they had made before, they *bought* more *spices* and ointments,[c] *that,* after a short repose, as soon as ever they could see to do it, *they might* SECT. CXCIV. Mark XVI. 1.

[a] *When the sabbath was over.*] This which Mark expresses by διαγενομενου του σαββατου, Matthew expresses by another phrase, οψε σαββατων, *in the end of the sabbath,* or *when the sabbath* (and consequently the preceding week, of which the sabbath was the last day,) *was over;* as in Philostratus, οψε μυστηριων is, *when the mysteries were ended.* So that the controversy between Maijus and Wolfburg, on this subject, seems needless; as the criticism of the former, who supposes these words in Matthew to belong to the close of the former chapter, and to refer to the time of sealing the sepulchre, is very unnatural; as Wolfius has shewn in his learned note on Mat. xxviii. 1.

[b] *Mary Magdalene,* &c. with Joanna, and some other pious women.] In the account the evangelists have given of the women who first came to the knowledge that Jesus was risen, Mary Magdalene is mentioned by all, the other Mary by the three first, and Salome only by Mark: but I have named Joanna here with the rest, as it appears from Luke xxiv. 10, in the next section, she was among the other women who went to the sepulchre, and was one of those who told these things to the apostles.

[c] They *bought* more *spices,* &c.] Luke had before observed, chap. xxiii. 56, page 564.) that they prepared spices and ointments, and then rested the sabbath day according to the commandment: and Mark here says, that διαγενομενου του σαββατου, *when the sabbath was over,* ηγορασαν; *they bought,* [not, *they had bought*] *spices, and* then (ver. 2, *very early in the morning*) *came to anoint him.* This I look upon as a strong intimation, that some time after six in the evening, (on what we call Saturday night,) when the sabbath was over, as it was then lawful to perform any common work, their generous hearts prompted them to purchase a larger quantity of aromatic drugs for this pious purpose.

SECT. CXCIV.

go and anoint him with them, and pay him all the respect of an honourable interment.

Mark XVI. 2

Now Mary Magdalene, with the other Mary and Salome, were ready before it was day; *and* setting out *very early in the morning*,[d] *while it was yet dark, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, they went to take a view of the sepulchre*,[e] to see if all things were as they had left them: and not long after, they were followed by Joanna, and the rest who were to meet them there, who came at the appointed time, *bringing the spices* with them, *which* (as was said before,) *they had prepared* to embalm the body of Jesus, and which indeed were a considerable weight; *and some* [*others*] of their female friends went also *with them* to assist on this occasion.[f]

2—And very early in the morning, [John, when it was yet dark,] [as it began to dawn towards the first *day* of the week,] [Luke, they came,] [to see the sepulchre,] [Luke, bringing the spices which they had prepared; and certain *others* with them.] [Mat. xxviii.—1. Luke xxiv. 1. John xx. 1.—]

[d] Setting out *very early in the morning*.] The learned and ingenious Mr. West, (of whose accurate Observations on the Resurrection of Christ I have given an extract at the end of the preface to the third volume of this work,) supposes Mary Magdalene, with the other Mary and Salome, to have set out to view the sepulchre before the time they had agreed to meet Joanna and the other women there, who were to bring the spices, and to come about sun-rising to embalm the body: and as the word ωρθρος, made use of in this place both by Mark and John (which we have rendered *early*,) sometimes signifies *over-early*, or *before the appointed time*, he naturally conjectures it has this signification here, and concludes, that the women came to the sepulchre at different times; the first setting out before the time agreed on, just as the day began to break, whereas the others came not thither till the sun was risen. (See West's Observ. p. 45, 46.)—The difference between this and the scheme here given, chiefly consists in Mr. West's supposing the women to have made two different visits to the sepulchre, and in consequence of that, two distinct reports to the disciples, whereas I have united them: though I do not suppose them to have all come together to the sepulchre, but only to have met there. Yet such advantages attend the scheme this author has proposed, that if it had been published to the world before I had composed this Harmony, I should have chosen to have formed it in a nearer agreement to it, but have now left it to appear with no material alteration in its order.

[e] *They went to take a view of the sepulchre*.] I have rendered the word ηλθον *went* (and have likewise explained the word ελθουσαι in the same manner at the first verse of this section,) which agrees better with the order of the story, and is frequently the sense in which our translators have rendered it elsewhere. See Mat. xii. 9; xiii. 36; xiv. 12; Mark iii. 19; Luke ii. 44; xiv. 1; John iv. 45, vi. 17; Acts iv. 23; xxviii. 14.—The true import of the word θεωρησαι is to *take a view*; and thus implies their going to see if all things were in the same condition as before, when they had seen the body laid in the sepulchre. (Luke xxiii. 55. p. 564.)—I think Maijus and Elsner justly observe, that the xxiii. chapter of Luke should not have ended at the place it does; for here, as in several other places, a sentence is divided: [Το μεν σαββατον ησυχασαν,—τη δε μια των σαββατων—ορθρου, &c.] Such divisions are great instances of negligence in the person by whom they were first made; but in a work like this Harmony, they are less material, and hardly in some cases avoidable.

[f] *Some others* of their female friends went also *with them*.] It was indeed a circumstance of decency, considering the office they were intending to perform, that the men and the women should perform their respective parts in it by themselves; which accordingly the evangelists plainly intimate they did. Their setting out alone was a remarkable instance of

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Mark XVI. 3.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

—4 For it was very great.

And as they were advancing towards the sepulchre, they were not under any apprehension from the soldiers that were set to guard it, who had been stationed there without their knowledge on the sabbath-day, (sect. cxciii. p. 566.) but remembering the stone that was placed at the mouth of it, *they said among themselves, Who shall roll away the stone for us from the door of the sepulchre*, which all of us together have not strength to remove? *For* they had 4 seen Nicodemus and Joseph stop up the entrance with it; and *it was* indeed *very large* and heavy.

Mat. XXVIII. 2.

Mat. XXVIII. 2. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

But this perplexity of theirs was altogether needless; for God had provided a very extraordinary way to remove that obstruction. *And behold*, with due regard and admiration, it was this: *There was*, but a little before they arrived there, *a great earthquake*, (which would naturally awaken the guards, if any of them had fallen asleep;) and very awful and astonishing were the circumstances that attended it; *for an angel of the Lord descending from heaven, had approached* in sight of the guards, *and rolled away the stone from the door, and sat down upon it.* And, at the very same time, Jesus, like a sleeping conqueror awaking on a sudden, burst asunder the bands of death, and sprung up to a new and immortal life. But none of the 3 guards saw him rise, being struck into the utmost consternation at the sight of the angel, who appeared to remove the stone: *and* well indeed they might be so; for *his countenance was like* the brightness of *lightning*, *and his* long flowing *garment* was as *white as snow*, glittering with extraordinary lustre beyond what their eyes could bear. *And the guards*, though 4 Romans and soldiers, *trembled for fear* at the sight *of him*, *and became like* so many *dead men*, falling down on their faces in a most helpless condition. But quickly after, presuming to lift up their eyes, and finding he had disappeared, and had left the sepulchre open, they fled

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.

their zeal and courage; perhaps some appointment might be made with Peter and John (who were early up, as it should seem on this occasion,) either to meet them, or come after them, to assist in removing the stone, though not in embalming the body.

SECT. CXCIV. to some distant place, to consult their own safety in so surprising an occurrence. [g]

John XX.—1. By this time the women, who had set out as it began to dawn, were near the place; *and* *Mary Magdalene*, transported with the distinguishing ardour of her affection, advanced a little before the rest; and, it being now light enough to discern objects, she looked forward, and *saw* to her great surprise, *that the stone was* already *taken away from the sepulchre*,[h] and that the tomb was open. *And* she was greatly astonished and alarmed at the sight, and presently concluded that the body was removed. She therefore stepped back, and informed her companions of this circumstance; upon which *they* [*also*] *looked, and* plainly *found* that it was as she represented, and that *the stone* was indeed *rolled away from* the entrance of *the sepulchre*.

John XX.—1. And Mary Magdalene seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

Luke xxiv. 2.

Luke XXIV. 2. And [when they *also* looked,] they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. [Mat. xvi. 4.—1.

And, not reflecting on the assurance Jesus had given them of his rising again from the dead, they knew not how to account for the removal

[g] They fled to some distant place, &c.] As nothing is said of any interview between them and the friends of Christ, there is great reason to believe that this was the case, as indeed it is on other accounts probable it should be.

[h] *Mary Magdalene saw that the stone was taken away*, &c.] Every attentive reader may have observed, how difficult it is to form the evangelists into one coherent story here, and to reconcile some seeming contrarieties in their accounts: nevertheless I hope, on a careful examination of this and the following sections, it will be found not impracticable. I shall not mention the very different schemes other critics have taken, nor the particular objections against them; but would only add a word or two concerning that of Dr. Guyse, which is both new and ingenious, yet not to me satisfactory. He supposes, (in his note on John xx. 2.) that there were two appearances of the angels to the women; and that Mark and Luke speak only of the first, and Matthew and John of the second; that is, in other words, (as I understand it,) That as soon as it was light, these good women came to the sepulchre, and saw an angel, who told them, "He *knew they* "*sought Jesus* but that *he was risen*;" and inviting them "to come and *see the place* "*where he was laid*," charged them "to "*go and tell his disciples that he would go* "*before them into Galilee.*" Upon this they go immediately and tell the disciples, (without saying any thing, that we find of the vision,) "that some unknown per-"son had *taken away the Lord, and laid* "*him, they knew not where:*" and then returning again to the sepulchre, in less than an hour, they see another, or the same angel as before, who, as if it were perfectly unknown by any former declaration, tells them just in the same words, "*He knew they sought Jesus*, but *he was* "*risen*; and, inviting them again to "*come and see the place where he had lain*," charges them again "to *go and tell his* "*disciples that he went before them into* "*Galilee.*" This is such a similarity of words and actions, immediately succeeding each other, as I believe can no where be paralleled.—The scheme I offer here, (which is that, which twice at the distance of several years, presented itself to me on view of the evangelists alone,) is incumbered with no such difficulty, nor indeed with any worth naming, except what arises from the transposition of Mark xvi.—2, and Luke xxiv. 12, on which see note [i] in this section, and note [a] in the next.

JOHN XX. 2. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

of the stone; but Mary Magdalene and her companions having consulted a little together, as well as the confusion they were in would admit, it was thought best that some of the disciples should be immediately acquainted with it: *she therefore runs* back to the city with all possible dispatch,[i] *and* knowing where they lodged, she *comes to Simon Peter and to* John, *that other disciple whom Jesus* peculiarly *loved*, (by whom this part of the story is most exactly and circumstantially recorded;) *and* finding them already up, and full of solicitude about the event of this important day, she *says to them*, O my friends, the sepulchre is broke open, and some or other must have been there, who have removed the stone; nor is there any room to doubt but *they have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him*;[k] so that I and my companions, whom I have left behind me, cannot find any method of performing that last office of respect and affection which you know we intended.

SECT. CXCIV. John XX. 2

LUKE XXIV. 12. —Then arose Peter

And, upon hearing this, without so much as staying to make any reply, *Peter*, whose heart was struck with such a circumstance, *arose* in a transport of various passions,[l] *and that other*

Luke xxiv. 12

[i] *She therefore runs* back to the city, &c.] It is not expressly said, whether the women with whom she came thither, staid any where near the sepulchre, or whether they returned to the city with her; but considering that John, who was an eye-witness, has mentioned only Mary Magdalene as running with the news, her companions in the mean while might stay at some distance, till Peter and John came, and had viewed the sepulchre; and might be joined there by the other women who were to bring the spices, upon whose coming they might go into the sepulchre. (Compare Mark xvi.—2, and Luke xxiv. 3, in the beginning of the next section.)—John hints nothing at all of Mary's having looked into the sepulchre before she ran back to him; and his narration being the last and most circumstantial, must guide us in adjusting what is ambiguous in the rest.

[k] *They have taken away the Lord*, &c.] It is difficult to suppose, with Dr. Clarke, Dr. Guyse, and many other critics, that she would have spoken thus, if the angels had before this expressly assured her of Christ's resurrection, and sent her away with such a message as they did to the disciples. Compare note P on ver. 13.

[l] *And Peter arose.*] These words in Luke come in after the account given by the women to the eleven, and all the rest of the disciples, (Luke xxiv. 9.) or the angels appearing to them, &c. and so make the chief objection against the scheme here offered to the reader: but the word *then*, with which this verse is introduced by our translators, does not well answer to ἀι in the original; and as we have often shewed before, that Luke is not always so exact in his order, as not to admit of some transposition, so it will run us into greater difficulties not to allow it in the present case, in which it is apparently reasonable to follow John's order, who was an eye-witness, and who gives the last and largest account. And indeed, if no transposition may be allowed, it is absolutely impossible in many

SECT CXCIV. John XX. 4

disciple whom we mentioned before, [*and*] *went* directly *out, and* never stopped till they *came to the sepulchre. And*, not contented with the swiftest pace with which they could walk, *they both ran together; and* as *that other disciple* was the younger man, he *out-ran Peter*, who had the start of him at the beginning, *and came first to the sepulchre: And stooping down* [*to look into it,*] *he saw the linen clothes*, or rollers, in which the corpse had been wrapped up, *lying* there by themselves; *but he did not* at first *enter in* to the sepulchre. *Then came Simon Peter*, very quickly *following him, and having stooped down* to look into the sepulchre, as John had done before, he was not satisfied with this; but that he might examine this important affair with such exactness as it deserved, *he went into the sepulchre, and* found the body was gone, but *saw the linen clothes*, with which it had been covered, *laid by themselves*, as John had observed from without. *And* he discovered another material circumstance, which had not been remarked before, namely, that *the napkin which was about his head* was *not laid with the linen clothes, but* was *folded up in a place*

[*and* went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.] [John xx. 3.]

JOHN XX. 4. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did out-run Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and [stooping down, he] went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes [laid by themselves;] [Luke xxiv—12.—]

7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

passages of the gospel-history to make any consistent harmony of the evangelists at all; as every attentive reader must have often observed.—This was the view in which I formerly considered the account that Luke has given, (ver. 12.) of Peter's visit to the sepulchre, which I have incorporated here with that of John, who at large relates their going there together, as soon as they received the first report from Mary Magdalene of the sepulchre being open, and the body gone; and, as Luke does not mention Peter's visit till after the report the women who had seen the angels made to the disciples, it could not any way agree with that of John, without allowing the necessity of a transposition. But, on considering the observations made by Mr. West, I am now satisfied, that Luke refers not to the visit which Peter made with John, but to a second visit which he made afterwards upon the women's coming with the report that they had seen two angels who had assured them Jesus was risen. These women Mr. West supposes to have been Joanna and the other women who came with the spices; upon whose coming to the disciples before the arrival of the two Marys and Salome, and telling them that they had seen two angels at the sepulchre, who had informed them Jesus was alive, Peter, willing to see if the angels were there, immediately arose and ran again to the sepulchre, and without entering in (as he had done before,) but only stooping down and looking into it, as he could see no angels there, but *only the linen clothes lying*, (for so it is that the words τα οθονια κειμενα μονα should be rendered,) came back again in great astonishment. (See West's Observ. p. 52, *&c seq.*) This I now think to be the best solution of this difficulty, and there is thus no need of any transposition; of which I could not but inform the reader, as it is the principal circumstance in which the scheme that Mr. West has given differs from mine, though I have left the harmony to stand as before, that it may still be seen what I had offered, as it will either way be found sufficient to acquit the evangelists from any charge of absurdity or contradiction.

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by itself,[m] in such an orderly manner, as plainly shewed that the body was not hastily hurried away, either by friend or enemy; but made the sepulchre appear rather like a bed-chamber, which a person on his awaking in the morning had leisurely quitted. *Then that other disciple* John xx. 8.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

who came first to the sepulchre, and being less adventurous than Peter, stood hitherto without, *went in also* to view it; *and* when *he saw* the several parts of the funeral dress in this situation, he was immediately convinced, *and believed* it now to be at least very probable that his dear Master was indeed revived.[n] *For hitherto* 9

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

they did not know the full meaning of those various intimations of *scripture*, to which Jesus had so often referred to convince them *that he must* certainly *rise from the dead*, (compare Mat. xvi. 21, Vol. I. p. 487, and Luke xviii. 31—34, Vol. II. p. 257.) which if they had considered, they would cheerfully have expected the sure accomplishment of them, and would not have been so much surprised at the news which Mary brought them.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home, [*Peter* wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.] [Luke xxiv.—12.]

Then both *the disciples went away again to* 10 *their companions* in the city,[o] [*Peter*] not being so thoroughly satisfied as John was, yet greatly *wondering in himself at what had hap-*

[m] *But folded up in a place by itself.*] Perhaps our Lord himself folded up the napkin; and this remarkable circumstance might be intended to signify the perfect calmness and composure with which he arose, transported with no rapture or surprise at his awaking out of this long sleep.—It would be very impertinent to inquire whence he had his clothes; the angels, no doubt furnished him with them; and perhaps the diversity of their colour or form, might prevent his being known by his friends at first sight.

[n] *He saw, and believed.*] Many interpreters explain this only of his believing that the body was not there; but that he must have believed before, on looking into the sepulchre: I rather understand it as a modest intimation, that he, first indeed of all others, *believed the truth of Christ's resurrection*, inferring it, as he reasonably might, from the order in which he found the sepulchre. These words have a force, and a grace, on this interpretation, which I think no other can give them. Much of the beauty of John's manner of writing consists in such hints as these, which shew the temper of that excellent man; and, were he to be considered merely as a human historian, add great weight to his testimony. See note [d] on John xxi. 20, sect. cci.

[o] *Went away again to their companions.*] So προς ἑαυτους seems evidently to signify: (compare Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 348.) Accordingly soon after this the women found the eleven and the rest together, (Luke xxiv. 9.)—Απελθειν προς ἑαυτον, never, that I know of, signifies *to come to one's self*, or to the exercise or possession of one's own mind, as some have strangely interpreted these words. Luke's expression in that case is different; Luke xv. 17, where he says of the prodigal, εις ἑαυτον ἐλθων, *when he came to himself*.—It was very prudent in Peter and John to retire immediately, lest they should have been questioned by the rulers, if found near the sepulchre.

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pened, and very much concerned as to the event of so surprising a beginning.

John XX. 11. *But Mary*, who was now returned, *stood near the sepulchre* after Peter and John were gone from it, not indeed going into it as they had done, but *weeping without*, in great perplexity at her not knowing what was become of Jesus: *and as she wept, she* also *stooped down*, [*and looked*] very wishfully *into the sepulchre: And* there she *saw* with great surprise *two angels* in the form of men, clothed *in white* habits, *sitting one at the head, and the other at the feet*, of that niche in the sepulchre *where the body of Jesus had been laid. And they said to her*, with a tender regard, *Woman, why dost thou weep* thus? And *she said to them*, Alas, I have reason enough to weep; it is *because they have taken away* the body of Jesus *my* dear *Lord, and I know not where they have laid him*, or how the sacred corpse may be neglected or abused.[p]

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre, weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, *and looked* into the sepulchre.

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain:

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 *And* just *as she had said this*, hearing a sudden noise behind her, *she turned back*, before the angels could give her any answer; *and* she *saw Jesus* himself *standing* near her: *and she knew not* at first *that it was Jesus*, his habit being changed, her eyes also overflowing with tears, and her mind being so far from any expectation of his appearance, and so much distressed, that she did not so much as look up to the face of the person who appeared.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Then *Jesus said to her*, with a gentle voice, *Woman, why dost thou weep* thus? and *whom dost thou seek?* And *she, supposing him to be the gardener*,[q] *said to him, Sir, if thou hast* for any unknown reason *borne him* away from *hence*,

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? she supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him

[p] *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.*] This expression may very easily be accounted for, in our manner of ranging this story; but it is very harsh to suppose, she should speak in this manner, if one of the angels had a few minutes before told her, that Jesus was risen. She perhaps thought they came to do a kind of homage to the place where he had lain, if she apprehended them to be angels; which whether she did, or did not, we do not certainly know.

[q] *Supposing him to be the gardener.*] It is very probable, that Jesus might speak low, or in a different way from what he usually did; and her taking him for the gardener, seems to intimate, there was nothing very splendid in his dress: accordingly, when he appeared to the two disciples in their way to Emmaus, they seem to have taken him for a person of a rank not much superior to their own. Her eyes might also be withheld at first from knowing Jesus by some supernatural restraint, as theirs were. Luke xiv. 16.

hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

where the master of the sepulchre saw fit so honourably to lay him but a few hours ago,[r] I earnestly beg thou wouldest immediately *tell me where thou hast put him, and I will remove him*, and take effectual care that his corpse shall be decently interred elsewhere, without giving any farther trouble here.

SECT. CXCIV. John XX. 15

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

Jesus, on this, *said to her*, with a loud and distinct voice, in his usual affectionate way, *Mary*, dost thou not know me? [*And*] Mary thereupon *turning* directly towards him, and eagerly fixing her eyes upon him, immediately discovered who it was; and, transported with a mixture of unutterable passions, *she said to him*, *Rabboni; that is to say*, [*My great*] *Master* and Teacher! and so much was her heart affected, that she could say no more, but immediately prostrated herself at his feet to embrace them. 16

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father:

But *Jesus said to her*, *Do not* stay here to *embrace me* [*now*,] either to pay thine homage to me, or to confirm thy faith; both which thou wilt have other opportunities of doing: *for I am not yet* withdrawn from your world, and *ascended to* the heavenly court of *my Father*, as you may imagine I should presently do;[s] but I shall yet 17

[r] *Sir, if thou hast borne him hence,*] It is observable, that she accosts this stranger in respectful language, even when she took him for a servant, (for κηπουρος cannot, I think, signify *the owner of the garden*;) prudently reflecting, that an error on that hand, would be more excusable than on the other, supposing he should have proved one of superior rank in a plain dress: and also, that she does not name Jesus, but speaks in indefinite terms, *if thou hast borne him hence*; intimating that he was the one person of whom her own thoughts and heart were so full, that she took it for granted every one must know who she meant. Such language in such a circumstance was perfectly natural.—If there was any hedge or harbour near the sepulchre, so that while she spake to Jesus she was not visible to her companions; or if this avenue was such that, while they came up to it, the sepulchre was between her and them; or if they were now waiting at some distance, or coming up with a slower pace, being charged with the weight of the materials for embalming, (any one of which might very possibly be the case;) a difficulty with respect to the time of their coming to the sepulchre, which may offer itself to the sagacious reader, in the disposition of the following section, when compared with this, will disappear at once.

[s] *Do not embrace me* now, *for I am not yet ascended to my Father.*] Mr Chandler, in his answer to the considerations on the Trial of the Witnesses, has given such convincing reasons in the present case for rendering the word ἅπτου, *embrace*, (which I before apprehended to be the sense of it,) that I think myself warranted in changing the version. We find indeed in the next section, that presently after this, when Jesus appeared to the women who were fleeing from the sepulchre, they were permitted to embrace him: (compare Mat. xxviii. 8, 9. and Mark xvi. 8.) But this is well accounted for by Mr. West, as graciously designed to calm their minds, and to remove the terror they were under; while Mary, who was under no such terror, had her grief dispersed at once, and was immediately con-

SECT. CXCIV. John XX. 17

continue for a little while upon the earth, and give you further opportunities of seeing me again: let nothing therefore now detain thee any longer, *but go* immediately *to my* dear *brethren*, for whom I have still the same affectionate regard as ever, *and say unto them*, *I* am risen from the dead, and after I have paid some visits to you, am shortly indeed to *ascend* into heaven, from whence I came: yet grieve not at that separation, but remember, that as I am going *to* him, who is in a very peculiar sense *my Father*, so I shall still be mindful of your interest, *and* am also going to *your Father*, *and* [*to*] *my God and your God;* for such he is now become, through that covenant which he has established with you in me:[t] on the whole, therefore, you have infinitely greater reason to rejoice than to mourn.

ther: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God and your God.

And upon saying this he immediately disappeared for the present; and the other women advancing to the sepulchre, where the angels

vinced that it was Christ, upon his calling her by her name. And, to induce her not to wait for any thing more at present, it was a very proper consideration that our Lord subjoins, *For I am not yet ascended to my Father;* in which he at once assured her, that he was not yet quitting this world, and plainly intimated his intention of seeing her and his disciples again, and paying frequent visits to them before his final departure, when what he had lately said to his disciples, of his going to the Father, (John xvi. 28.) should be fulfilled by his ascension into heaven. (See West's Observ. p. 167, *& seq.*)—The sense is obvious and easy in this view, and Dr. Whitby, (in his note on this place,) Mr. Fleming, (Christol. Vol. III. p. 502.) Mr. Cradock, and others interpret these words as I have done in the paraphrase; and it is strange that Mr. Whiston should think this text inexplicable, unless we suppose "that Christ "was *immediately* to *ascend to his Father*, "before he could at all converse with "any of them, or receive the expressions "of their homage to him." (See the Appendix to his Sermons at Boyle's Lect. p. 298.—300.) If there had been any necessity for his ascending immediately, he surely would not first have appeared to Mary and then to the other women on their way to the city. The interpretation here given suits the words as well, and other scriptures much better. She probably thought, that if he was risen he was also returned back to his heavenly Father, to keep up his stated abode with him again, as he quickly after did: to assure her therefore of the contrary, was exceeding proper, and the best reason that could be given to persuade her to wave any farther discourse now, with which to be sure she must otherwise have been earnestly desirous to detain her dear Lord.—To suppose, with Messrs. L'Enfant and Beausobre, that she meant this adoration as homage to a temporal prince, and that our Lord's answer was chiefly intended as a declaration that he must *ascend to his Father before he received his kingdom*, appears to me very unnatural.

[t] *Go to my brethren*, &c.] By calling the disciples his brethren, and God their Father and their God, he intimates in the strongest manner the full forgiveness of their fault in leaving him, even without ever mentioning it; just as the Father of the prodigal, (Luke xv. 22, *& seq.*) intimated his forgiveness of his undutiful behaviour, by calling for the best robe, &c. without any direct reply to what his penitent child had said of his unworthiness to be called his son. These exquisite touches, which every where abound in the evangelical writings, give inexpressible delight to a well-turned heart, and shew how perfectly Christ knew our frame.

continued, received the news of his resurrection from them, and were directed, as Mary Magdalene also was, to report it to the disciples, with a variety of additional circumstances, which will be mentioned in the following section. SECT. CXCIV.

IMPROVEMENT.

How fit is it that we should *sing unto the Lord a new song!* and with what thankful hearts should we join, on his own day, and on every day, to congratulate the triumph of his rising from the dead, and to rejoice in this birth-day of our hopes! Now is the justice of God amply satisfied, or the prisoner had never been released. Now is the reproach of the cross ceased, and turned into proportionable glory. That reproach was rolled away at once by the descending angel, who appeared, not to awaken Christ from his sleep, or to bring him a new life, for he had himself a power, whenever he pleased, to resume that which he had voluntarily resigned, (John x. 18.); but he came to add a solemn pomp to his revival, and to strike the guards with such a terror as would effectually prevent any mad attempt on this glorious Conqueror, when he was bursting the bonds in which he had for a while been held. Mat. xxviii. 1—4

O Lord, we acknowledge the truth of thy promise: *thou didst not leave his soul in hell, neither didst thou suffer* the flesh of *thine Holy One to see corruption;* (Psal. xvi. 10.) *Now is Christ* indeed *risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept,* (1 Cor. xv. 20.): may we in conformity to his holy example, be *dead to sin,* and *to the world; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also* may *walk in newness of life!* (Rom. vi. 4.) Then will *he that raised up Christ from the dead,* ere long, *quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* (Rom. viii. 11.)

Let the faith of what has been done with regard to our glorified Head, and shall at length be accomplished with respect to all his members, daily gladden our hearts. When our eyes are weeping, and our souls sinking within us, let us raise our thoughts to Jesus our risen, and now ascended Redeemer; who says to all his brethren these gracious words, (which may justly be received with transports of astonishment, and fill our hearts at the same time *with joy unspeakable and full of glory),* "*I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.*" John xx. 17.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is now, through the death and resurrection of his dear Son, (whom by raising him from the dead, he has so solemnly owned under that relation,) become our Father and our God. As such let us honour him, love him, and rejoice in him; and when we must leave this

SECT. CXCIV. John XX. 17.

world, which Christ has long since left, let it delight our souls to think, that we shall likewise ascend after him, and dwell with him in the propitious Divine presence. In the mean time, *if we are risen with Christ*, let us *seek those things which are above, where Christ* now *sitteth at the right hand of God*, (Col. iii. 1.): and let us be willing, in whatever sense God shall appoint, to be *made conformable to his death*, that we may also be *partakers of his resurrection* and glory. (Phil. iii. 10, 11.)

SECT. CXCV.

Christ having appeared to Mary, the other women come to the sepulchre, and are informed of his resurrection by the angels. He appears to the women as they return to the city; but neither their testimony, nor that of Mary, is received by the disciples. Mat. XXVIII. 5—10. Mark XVI.—2. 5—11. Luke XXIV. 3—11. John XX. 18.

MARK XVI. 9.

SECT. CXCV. Mark XVI. 9.

WE have just *now* seen in the preceding section, that *when* [*Jesus*] *was risen* from the dead, very *early on the first day of the week*, (which day was afterwards observed by his followers in commemoration of this important fact), *he made his first appearance to Mary Magdalene, out of whom* (as was formerly said,) *he had* some time before *ejected* no less than *seven dæmons*, who by an awful providence were permitted to join together in afflicting her. (Compare Luke viii. 2, vol. I. 334.)

MARK XVI. 9. NOW when *Jesus* was risen early, the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

2 *But* it is now time to return to the women, her companions, from whom she had parted when she went to inform Peter and John that the sepulchre was open: (John xx. 2. p. 576.) These were now joined by [*the other women*] who had brought the spices, and while Mary was engaged in this interview with Christ, *came* up together *to the sepulchre:* and it was now *about* the time of *the rising of the sun.*[a] *And*

—2 And they [*i. e. the other women*] came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

[a] *About the rising of the sun.*] We have seen before, that Mary Magdalene, with the other Mary and Salome, set out while it was yet dark, and came within sight of the sepulchre for the first time, just as it grew light enough to discern that it was opened, (compare Mat. xxviii. 1, and John xxi. 1. p. 574.); but by that time Mary had called Peter and John, and they had viewed the sepulchre, and Joanna was come with the other women who were to bring the spices, which might all pass in less than an hour, the sun was up. These circumstances well agree with

SECT. CXCV.

Luke XXIV. 3

LUKE XXIV. 3. And they entered [into the sepulchre,] and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. [Mark xvi. 5.—]

having found the passage open without any obstruction in the way, and observed as they stood at a distance that Peter and John had done the like, they *entered into the sepulchre* themselves; but as they had before suspected on seeing it open, *they found not the body of the Lord Jesus.*

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold [they saw] two men [*who*] stood by them in shining garments; [*one of them* a young man, *who had been* sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment.] [Mark xvi.—5.—]

And it came to pass, that *as they were in great perplexity on this account,* and knew not what to think was become of the body, *behold,* to their inexpressible astonishment, *they saw* the *two* angels whom Mary had seen but a little before, (who had disappeared upon their coming to the sepulchre, but now rendered themselves visible at once,) in the form of *men* arrayed *in splendid habits* [*who*] came and *stood by them,* the women being unable to discover how they came in: and [*one of them*] appeared like *a young man,* with a beautiful and cheerful aspect, *clothed in a long white robe,* glittering with lustre like the purest snow: and this was the angel who appeared at first to the guards, and [*who had been*] afterwards seen by Mary, *sitting on the right side* of the entrance into the sepulchre. 4

5—And [they were affrighted,] and bowed down *their* faces to the earth. [Mark xvi.—5.]

And they were greatly *terrified* at this extraordinary and surprising sight; *and,* stepping back to the very door,[b] they *bowed their faces to the ground,* and fixed their eyes upon it, in token of the profoundest respect.[c] 5

MAT. XXVIII. 5. And the angel answered and said unto the women, [Be not affrighted:] for I know that ye seek

But the angel, in a most mild and condescending manner, *answered and said unto the women,*[d] *Do not be terrified* at what you see; *for* we appear to comfort rather than afflict you, and have the best tidings to bring you that ever you heard: *I know, that* in the strength of your af- Mat. xxviii. 5

each other, and are presumptions in favour of the order which we have laid down.

[b] Stepping back to the very door.] This it was natural for them to do; and from the angel's afterwards inviting them to come in and view the sepulchre, we may infer that they were now precisely in this attitude.

[c] *They bowed their faces to the ground,* and fixed their eyes upon it, &c.] The words ηλιγασαν το προσωπον εις την γην, do not intimate their *prostrating themselves* before the *angels,* but a respectful and reverential *declining their heads,* and looking downward, that they might not appear to gaze; which is well known to have been forbidden to the Jews, upon the sight of a celestial vision: (see Exod. xix. 21; and compare Judg. xiii. 20.) And it was also considered as dangerous by the heathen, when their deities, or any celestial messengers from them, were supposed to make themselves visible; as Elsner has finely shewn in his learned and entertaining note here. Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 284.

[d] *But the angel answered,* &c.] I entirely agree with Mr. West, that the particle δε should here be rendered *But.* See West's Observ. p. 23.

SECT. CXCV. Mat. XXVII. 5

fection *you* are come to *seek* that holy and excellent Person, *Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified* the other day, and buried here: but *why seek ye the living among the dead?* and why are ye come hither with materials for embalming one who is possessed of an immortal life?

Jesus [of Nazareth,] which was crucified: [Luke, Why seek ye the living among the dead?] [Mark xvi. 6.—Luke xxiv.—5.]

Luke xxiv. 6.

He is not here, but is risen this morning, *as he said* that he should: *behold*, the tomb *where they laid him;* the body is not here: *come* in, and satisfy yourselves by the strictest inquiry; and *view*, with all the mixture of holy affections which are suitable to such a circumstance, *the place where the Lord* of life and glory, the Prince of angels and men, *lay* for a while a breathless corpse: but he has now triumphed over the grave: and you have no reason to be surprised to hear it: for it not only was most probable in itself that this would be the case, but he also often foretold it. *Remember* particularly *how he spake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee* with you, where I know with what kindness you attended and ministered to him;[e] Recollect that remarkable *saying* of his which was so often repeated, *The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinners, and be crucified, and the third day* he shall *rise again;* (see Mat. xvi. 21, Vol. I. page 487; xvii. 22, 23, Vol. II. p. 15; and xx. 18, 19, p. 257.) now this, as you well know, is the third day; and what he said, is most exactly verified. *And*, while the angel spake thus, *they* called to mind what they had heard from Jesus, and perfectly *remembered his words.* *But go quickly*, added he, and communicate to your friends the joy which you now feel; yea, go *and tell his* mourning *disciples, and* particularly tell *Peter*, who is so overwhelmed with his peculiar sorrows, *that he is risen from the dead: and* acquaint them also, in further confirmation of the truth of it, *Behold, he is* shortly *going before you into Galilee;*[f] for I am commissioned to

LUKE XXIV 6. He is not here, but is risen, [as he said;] [Mark, behold where they laid him;][come see the place where the Lord lay:] remember how he spake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, [Mat. xxviii. 6. Mark xvi.—6.]

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words.

MAT XXVIII. 7. [But] go [your way] quickly, and tell his disciples [and Peter] that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee,

[e] *Remember how he spake unto you, when he was yet in Galilee.*] This familiar manner in which the angel speaks of what passed between Jesus and them in Galilee, seems to intimate, that he had then been present, though invisible, and heard what Jesus said. The hint suggests many agreeable reflections, which the pious reader will dwell upon at leisure.—The mention which he afterwards makes of Peter, whether it were, or were not by a particular charge from Christ, is also observable in the same view.

[f] *He is going before you into Galilee.*]

there shall ye see him, [as he said unto you:] Lo, I have told you. [Mark xvi. 7.]

assure you, that *there ye shall* all *see him, as he said to you* that he would meet you there; (compare Mat. xxvi. 32; and Mark xiv. 28. p. 476.) *Lo, I,* who am one of the angels that stand in the presence of God, *have told you* this, and my associate is here ready to attest it; and therefore, important and wonderful as the message is, you need not at all scruple to report it. SECT. CXCV. Mat. XXVIII. 7

MARK XVI. 8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man, for they were afraid; [and with fear and and great joy did run to bring his disciples word.] [Mat. xxviii. 8.]

And upon this, instead of making any further scrutiny, *they went out quickly,*[g] *and fled from the sepulchre* as fast as possible; *for they trembled, and were amazed* at this angelic vision; *and,* whoever they met by the way, *they said nothing to any one* of them *for they were* very much *affrighted;* [*but*] *with* hearts full of *fear* at what they had seen, *and* with a mixture also of *great joy,* at this happy news which they had received in so awful a manner,[h] *they ran* with all the speed they could *to bring his disciples word,* Mark xvi. 8.

MAT. XXVIII. 9. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them,

And as they were going on their way *to tell his disciples,*[i] *behold, Jesus* himself *met* Mat. xxviii. 9

When we consider this expression of the angel to the women, as Mark has related it, [εἰπατε—ὅτι προαγει ὑμας, &c.] the construction shews, as the learned Bos observes, (Exercit. p. 23.) that these words are the message which the angel puts into the mouth of these women, to be delivered by them to the apostles. But what is added, [*there shall ye see him*] may, consistent with this criticism, be understood as in the paraphrase, which makes the sense more complete, by adding a very material, and, to them who so tenderly loved Jesus, a very delightful circumstance; namely, that they should *see him themselves,* and not merely receive the most credible assurances of his resurrection from others.

[g] *They went out quickly.*] This is the exact import of the word ἐξελθουσαι, which is the same in both the evangelists, but is properly rendered here in Matthew, *they departed.* (See West's Observ. p. 36.)

[h] *With fear and joy.*] It was so natural for such a mixture of passions to arise on this grand occasion, that I think very little stress is to be laid on Mark's mentioning their fear alone, and Matthew's mentioning their joy with it, to prove they relate different stories.—I have since the pleasure to find, that this is represented in the same light by Mr. West, who has clearly shewn, that both these sacred writers speak of the same fact. (See West's Observ. p. 37—40.

[i] *And as they were going* on their way *to tell his disciples.*] Admitting what is here supposed, that there was but one vision of angels (besides that to Mary Magdalene), and one message sent by them, this will I think establish the order in which we have ranged this story. For if, (as Dr. Clarke and many other critics strangely suppose,) Mary's interview with the apostles (John xx. 2.) had happened between the angelic vision and this appearance of Christ to the women, such a connection as this would have been very unnatural. Matthew would on that hypothesis rather have said, *And when they had told his disciples* [*and they believed them not*], *Jesus met them,* &c.—But Mr. West, who apprehends that there were several distinct appearances of angels, and two distinct appearances of Christ to the women, (the first to Mary Magdalene and the second to the other Mary and Salome, when the other women were not present), concludes, that these several facts were reported to the apostles at different times, and by different women; and that Joanna and the other women, who had only seen the angels after the two Marys and Salome were gone from the sepulchre, made their report to the apostles before the arrival of

SECT. CXCV. Mat. XXVIII.

them,[k] *saying*, in the usual form of congratulatory salutations, *Hail*, my friends! I give you joy of the day. *And* upon this, beginning to recover from their fear, as they saw it was Jesus,

saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

9 *they drew near* in the most respectful manner, *and*, prostrating themselves before him, *took hold of his feet*, and embraced them, *and paid their homage to him* on this joyful occasion.

10 *Then Jesus*, as he saw that they were still in a great deal of confusion, did not long permit them to continue in that posture, but comforted and dismissed them (as he had done before with respect to Mary); and *said to them*, *Be not* any more *afraid*, for you have indeed no reason for it; [*but*] as you have now *the fullest* proof that I am actually risen from the dead, *go* ye therefore and *tell my* dear *brethren*, whoever of them you may meet here in the city,[l] *that they go away into Galilee*, to the place I formerly appointed (see note [b] on Mat. xxvi. 32, p. 476): *and* when a proper number of them is met *there*, *they shall see me* appear publicly among them, to remove all the remaining doubts which any of them may entertain as to the certainty of my resurrection.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

Luke xxiv. 9

Now after Jesus had spoken these words, he immediately disappeared; and the women ran on to carry the news: *and when they were returned from the sepulchre* to Jerusalem, *they told*

Luke XXIV. 9. And [they] returned from the sepulchre, and told all these

the two Marys and Salome; and by thus representing the story in a different order, he obviates the difficulty arising from the account which the two disciples that were going to Emmaus give of the report they had heard from the women. Luke xxiv. 22—24. (See West's Observ. p. 77, 86, *& seq.*)

[k] *Jesus* himself *met them.*] I cannot think, with Dr. Lightfoot, (Hor. Heb. in loc.) that this relates to his interview with Mary Magdalene described before; for though an enallage or exchange of numbers be sometimes used, (see note [h] on Luke xxiii. 39, p. 546.) yet it is not to be admitted without necessity. Now, it is certain, Mary was alone when Christ appeared to her; and that appearance was at the sepulchre, this between that and the city, and probably after they dispatched some considerable part of the way in their flight. The words [*as they went to tell his disciples*,] are indeed wanting in many ancient versions and manuscripts, as Dr. Mill has shewn in his note on this place; but Dr. Whitby, with considerable reason, contends that they are genuine; (see his Examen. Millii. p. 91.) and the sense of them seems implied in the close of the preceding verse.

[l] *My brethren.*] The reader will observe our Lord speaks the same language here which he had used John xx. 17. (See note [c] on that text, p. 582.) No doubt, these affectionate friends of Christ were exact in reporting this circumstance, that their injured Lord called them *his brethren* still. And both Matthew and John, to whom the glad tidings were immediately brought, felt it strike so powerfully on their hearts, that they could not but record it.

things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

all these things to the eleven apostles, *and to all the rest* of the disciples, whom they met with then, or on the following days,[m] having it much at heart to deliver this important message in the most punctual and effectual manner. SECT. CXCV. Luke XXIV. 9

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

And they were Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary [*the mother*] *of James* and Joses, and Salome, *and the other women* that had gone *with them* to the sepulchre, as above, with an intent to embalm Christ's body (p. 574, 575,) *who* were the persons that were thus honoured with this message from the angels, and from Christ himself: and who accordingly came and *told these things to the apostles*, who had none of them as yet seen any thing more themselves than that the sepulchre was empty, and the linen clothes laid in order. 10

MARK XVI. 10. *And* [Mary Magdalene] went and told [the disciples] that had been with him, as they mourned and wept, [that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.] [John xx. 18.]

And Mary Magdalene in particular *went* with the other women, *and told the disciples that had been* so constantly *with him, as they were mourning and weeping* for the loss of their dear Master, *that she* also *had seen the Lord; and that* indeed *he* had appeared to her the first of all the company, and *had spoken these* gracious *things unto her* as well as to them relating to his resurrection from the dead, and had expressly ordered her to acquaint them with his purpose of ascending ere long to his Father and their Father, and to his God and their God. (Compare John xx. 17, p. 581.) Mark xvi. 10.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not: [and their words seemed to them as idle tales.] [Luke xxiv. 11.]

But such were the prevailing prejudices that had possessed the minds of the disciples, and so entirely were their spirits dejected, and their hopes blasted by the death of their Lord, that though they could not think this was related with a design to impose upon them, yet they were ready to impute it to the power of imagination; *and* even *when they heard that he was* actually *alive, and had been seen by her*, and by the other women who also testified the same, *they did not* in general *believe* it; *but their words seemed to* most of *them as an idle tale*, and they 11

[m] *And to all the rest.*] This I think refers not only to one report, but to the repetition of the testimony to any of their pious friends who believed in Jesus: and if that be admitted, it will be an additional proof, that what is said in ver. 12, should be transposed in such a manner as is necessary for reconciling it with the scheme we have proposed in the preceding section. Compare note [p] on Luke xxiv. 12, p. 577.

SECT. CXCV. determined to suspend their belief of so important a fact, till they were satisfied of it by the testimony of their own senses; which, through the great condescension of their Lord, several of them were before the end of that day, as we shall quickly relate.

Mark XVI. 11.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XXVIII. 6. WE are now again called, as by the angel's voice, to come and see the place where the Lord lay, and to take an affectionate survey of that sepulchre which our rising Saviour had left, and where he had laid aside the dress of death, as a token that he should return to it no more. How wonderful that he should ever have lain there! that the Lord of life should have dwelt among the dead, and from the glory of the throne of God, should have sunk down to the abasement of the grave!—But he has burst its prison-doors, and has abolished death, and him who had the power of it; abolished it for himself and us. How are all its terrors now disarmed! *O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!* (1 Cor. xv. 55.)

7, 8 With what pleasure did the angels deliver this gracious message of their Lord, as well as ours! and with what transport did the pious women receive it! Behold the tender care of Christ over his people! Angels have it immediately in charge to send the glad tidings to his disciples; and Jesus repeats and confirms 10 them. *Go tell my brethren,* I am risen from the dead. Lord! Is this thy language concerning those who but a few hours before had forsaken thee! and one of them, with such dreadful imprecations, denied thee! Yet even that disciple is not excluded; nay, to him is it peculiarly addressed: go tell thy brethren, and in particular tell Peter, that he, poor mourner, may especially be comforted. Compassionate Redeemer! thou hast brought up from the tomb with thee, that tenderness and goodness which laid thee there!

Mark XVI. 7.

9 Such is the freedom and glory of thy grace, that thou sometimes dost first manifest thyself to those who were once in the most miserable bondage to Satan. Whenever this is the case, may the peculiar obligation be remembered! May every remainder of unbelief be subdued in our souls! and may we joy-10 fully communicate to all around us, the tidings of a risen Saviour, and the merciful discoveries of his presence to us!

SECT. CXCVI.

The guards, returning to Jerusalem, make their report to the chief priests; and are bribed to say, that the disciples stole the body of Christ while they slept. Christ appears to Peter, and then to two other disciples. Mat. XXVIII. 11—15. Mark XVI. 12, 13.

MAT. XXVIII. 11.

MAT. XXVIII. 11. NOW when they were going, behold, some of the watch came unto the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

NOW while these extraordinary things were transacting, and [*the women*] *were going* to tell the disciples what they had heard and seen, *behold, some of the guards*, who had fled from the sepulchre in great consternation, began a little to recollect themselves, as to the excuse they should make for its being broke open, and the body being gone, as it would soon be known that it was: they *came* therefore *into the city, and told the chief priests*, from whom they had received their immediate charge, *all that had happened*; and urged how impossible it was for them to make any opposition in the presence of the angel, who shook the very earth with the terror of his appearance, and therefore might be easily supposed to take away all power of resistance from them. And thus these ignorant and stupid heathens became in effect the first preachers of Christ's resurrection, and were witnesses of the truth of it to the most inveterate of his enemies.[a]

SECT. CXCVI. Mat. XXVIII. 11

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they

This report could not but strike the chief priests into some amazement and confusion; and therefore they immediately convened the sanhedrim; *and having met together with the elders* of the people, they deliberated upon it, *and consulted* among themselves, what they should do in so perplexing an emergency; and particularly, whether they should dismiss the guards, with a charge to conceal the story they

12

[a] These ignorant and stupid heathens became in effect the first preachers, &c.] Such news, coming from such persons, must undoubtedly throw the priests into inexpressible confusion; but it is remarkable, that neither the soldiers nor the priests were converted, by what the one saw, or the other heard. Perhaps the soldiers might think that Jesus was like some of their fabulous heroes, the son of some deity, who brought him to life again; but, instead of imagining themselves concerned in the purposes of his resurrection, they might perhaps abuse their knowledge of it, to confirm their belief of some superstitious tales of their own priests which bore some little resemblance to it; as those of Alcestes, Hippolytus, Herculps, and many others did. See Valer. Max. lib. i. cap. viii. 2; and Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. cap.

SECT. CXCVI. Mat. XXVIII

had told them; or should accuse them to the governor, and attempt to punish them for neglecting their duty: but, considering the manner in which the governor had appeared affected towards Jesus, and the many prodigies which had attended his death, by which Pilate's conscience must have been in some degree awakened; and also knowing they had no positive proof of any negligence or treachery in the soldiers, *they* resolved to commence no prosecution against them, and to pass it over without any complaint; but, apprehending that the most effectual method they could take would be to endeavour to pervert their evidence, they *gave* [*a*] *large* [*sum of*] *money to the soldiers*,[b] *Saying*, Since this strange thing has happened, whether there really was any sorcery in it, or whether it was merely your dream,[c] it must for the public safety be concealed, or the whole nation will be deluded and undone: we must therefore insist upon it, that neither you, nor your companions, say any thing of what you imagine you saw; but if any should question you about it, and pretend that this Jesus is risen, *say ye* only in the general, We were weary with so long a watch, and dropped asleep; and we conclude, *that his disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept*.[d] *And* you have no need to be afraid of being punished

gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye. His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.

14 And if this come to the gover-

[b] *They gave a large* sum of *money to the soldiers.*] Mr. Ditton very well observes, (in his unanswerable demonstration of Christ's resurrection, p. 296.) that had they not been afraid to put them to death, as they were Romans, it is very probable that Caiaphas's maxim, (John xi. 50.) That *it was better one man should die than all the people perish*, would have cost some of them their lives: at least the commanding officer, had he been fully in their power, would have been in imminent danger. Could they have proved any neglect, no doubt these soldiers would have been prosecuted to the utmost; (as Peter's guards were afterwards, Acts xii. 19.) But, as they were destitute of all proof, it was prudent not to prosecute them at all; for, had Pilate acquitted them, it would have been in effect a public declaration, that he was convinced Jesus was indeed risen.

[c] Whether there really was any sorcery in it, &c.] They must, to be sure, be puzzled to account for this strange event; and, laying it down as a first principle, "that Jesus must be an impostor," they would, of course, incline to impute his resurrection, as they had ascribed his miracles, to some diabolical operation. It is however probable, that such artful men might speak of it in such loose terms as the paraphrase represents, though they could not seriously endeavour to persuade the guards they were in a dream.

[d] *And stole him away while we slept.*] It was ridiculous to pretend to say with any certainty what passed *while they were asleep*; so that this was in effect only hiring them to say, that they knew nothing of the matter, and did not observe any thing more, than ordinary, had passed that night. How absurd this evidence was, a thousand circumstances [illegible] as most writers in defence of [illegible] have demonstrated, and perhaps [illegible] few words, better than Bishop Burnet [illegible] the Articles, p. 64.

nor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

for your negligence; for *if this should* come to *be heard by the governor*, and he should blame you for sleeping on your guard, *we will persuade him* to make no farther inquiry about it, *and* by our interest with him will *make you* easy and *secure*.

SECT. CXCVI. Mat. XXVIII. 14

15 So they took the money and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

And they took the money that was offered them, *and did as they were taught;* and, according to their instructions, they concealed what they had seen, and pretended that some of the disciples must have taken the advantage of their weariness and neglect, and so have carried off the body while they were fallen asleep. *And* such are the prejudices of that unhappy people, that *this story*, wild and senseless as it was, *is commonly reported among the Jews even to this day:* [e] and they still choose, in opposition to the most certain evidence, to believe this extravagant suggestion, rather than yield to the truth of Christ's resurrection, though solemnly attested to them, by many who saw and conversed familiarly with him after he was risen from the dead; of which number "Peter was one, who was early dis-"tinguished by the favour of seeing him, and "to whom indeed he appeared first of all the "apostles." [f] (See 1 Cor. xv. 5.) 15

[e] *Reported among the Jews even to this day.*] This seems to intimate, That Matthew wrote his gospel several years after our Lord's resurrection.—As to the industry of the Jews in propagating this report, it is very observable, that Justin Martyr, (Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 368, Edit. Thirlb.) expressly asserts, "that "the Jews sent chosen men of consider-"able rank over all the world, not only "in the general to represent Christianity "as an impious sect, but to assert that "the body of Jesus was stolen out of his "tomb by night, and that the persons "who thus fraudulently conveyed him "away, took occasion from thence to "report, that he rose from the dead, and "ascended into heaven." And this message is spoken of, as having been sent before the destruction of Jerusalem. Compare note [a] on Acts xxviii. 22, Vol. III. § lx.

[f] Peter was one,——to whom he appeared first of all the apostles.] Though the evangelists have not recorded the particular circumstances of our Lord's appearance to Peter, yet it is evident that he appeared first to Peter before he was seen by the rest of the apostles. (Compare 1 Cor. xv. 5, and Luke xxiv. 34.) Dr. Lightfoot therefore supposes, that Peter was one of the two disciples to whom Christ appeared as they were going to Emmaus; and imagines, he was so earnestly desirous to obtain a sight of Christ, that upon hearing from the women, (Mat. xxviii. 7, 8.) that he would *go before them into Galilee, where they should see him*, he presently set out with Cleophas for Galilee; but, having seen him in their way to Emmaus, they hastened back to Jerusalem to acquaint the disciples with it; upon which the rest of the eleven, as they knew of Peter's journey, when they saw him return so suddenly and unexpectedly, cried out, *Certainly the Lord has appeared to Simon, else he would never have come back so soon.* (See Lightfoot. Hor. Hebr. on Mark xvi. 12; and Luke xxiv. 34.) But, had Peter been one of these two disciples, it is no way probable that, in the large account which Luke has given of this matter, (chap. xxiv. 13, *& seq.*) his name would not have been mentioned as well as that of Cleophas; or that a person of his forwardness

SECT. CXCVI.

Mark XVI. 12

Now this account that Jesus was risen was brought to the disciples by the women soon after his resurrection, on the first day of the week; *and after this*, on the same day, *he appeared to two of them*, though *in another form*, or in a different habit from what he ordinarily wore,[g] *as they were walking* on the way, *and going into the country* to Emmaus, a neighbouring village.[h] *And they went* back directly, *and told it to the rest* of their companions; *yet they did not* all immediately *believe them*, till at length he appeared to all his apostles together once and again, and gave them such convincing evidence as they could not withstand. But these facts are of so great importance, that we shall give a particular narration of each, and first, of that which happened on the way to Emmaus, in the next section.

MARK XVI. 12. After that, he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY there is nothing in the whole sacred story which does in a more affecting manner illustrate the deplorable hardness of the human heart in this degenerate state, than the portion of it which is now before us. What but the testimony of an apostle

would have continued silent, and have left Cleophas to carry on the conversation as the chief speaker: nor does it suit with the circumstances of the story, that after Peter's going to the sepulchre had been related just before, it should be only spoken of in this conversation, (verse 24.) as what was done, not by one of themselves, but by certain of them that were with them; or that it should be said, when they returned to Jerusalem, (ver. 33.) that they found the eleven gathered together, if one of those that returned belonged to that number, and was one of these eleven. (Compare note [b] on Luke xxiv. 34, § cxcviii.

[g] *He appeared to two of them*, &c.] The only reason which Masius has for suspecting, (Supplem. Critic. Vol. II. p. 1788.) that this appearance was different from that which Luke describes, as made to the two disciples that were on their journey to Emmaus, (chap. xxiv. 13, *& seq.*) is this: the companions of these two disciples are represented here by Mark as not believing the resurrection of Christ when attested by them; whereas when the two disciples from Emmaus came to make this report, the rest, before they could tell their story, saluted them with that joyful declaration, *The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.* (Luke xxiv. 34.) But I apprehend these seemingly different accounts may be reconciled, by observing, that various persons in the same company were variously impressed: and that some of those to whom the travellers from Emmaus came, had, even after their story was told, some remaining doubts, appears from Luke himself. See Luke xxiv. 37, 41, § cxcviii. and note [a] on Mat. xxviii. 17, § ccii.

[h] *Into the country to* Emmaus, *&c.*] Emmaus was a village about sixty furlongs distant from Jerusalem, as we are told by Luke (chap. xxiv. 13,) and Josephus gives the same account of its situation, Bell. Jud. lib. 7. cap. 6 (al. 26.) § 6. And therefore though they have been frequently confounded, this must have been a different place from that which was afterwards called Nicopolis, which lay near the lake of Genesareth, at a much greater distance from Jerusalem. See Reland. Palæstin. lib. iii. p. 427, *& seq.*

could have been sufficient to persuade us, that men who had been but a few hours before the witnesses of such an awful scene, who had beheld the angel descending, had felt the earth trembling, had seen the sepulchre bursting open by a divine power, and had fallen down in helpless astonishment and confusion, perhaps expecting every moment to be themselves destroyed, should that very day, yea, that very morning, suffer themselves to be hired by a sum of money to do their utmost to asperse the character of Christ, and to invalidate the evidence of his resurrection, of which they were in effect eye-witnesses? SECT. CXCVI. Mat. XXVIII 11—15

Nay, how astonishing is it, that the chief priests themselves, 12
the public ministers of the Lord of hosts, could act such a part as this! They hear this full evidence that he, that Jesus whom they had murdered, was risen from the dead; and they well knew and remembered, that he had himself put the proof of his mission on this very fact; a fact to which the prodigies at his death, which they themselves had seen and felt, added an inexpressible weight of probability. Who would not have expected that they should have been alarmed, convinced, and humbled? that they should have turned the remaining days of the passover into a public fast, and have solicitously sought out him who was so powerfully declared to be the Son of God, to cast themselves at his feet, and entreat his pardon and grace? But instead of this, with invincible and growing malice, they set themselves to oppose him, and bribe the soldiers to testify a lie, the most to his dishonour of any that hell could invent. And surely, had 13
not Christ been kept out of their sight and power, they would, notwithstanding all this, have endeavoured to bring him down to the tomb again, on the very same principles on which they would have slain Lazarus after his resurrection, (John xii. 10.) So true does it appear, in this renewed and unequalled instance, that *if men hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.* (Luke xvi. 31.)

No question but these very men, when pressed with the evidences of Christ's resurrection, answered, as succeeding infidels have presumptuously done, "that he should have *appeared to* "*them*, if he expected they should believe *he was risen*." But what assurance can we have, that the same prejudices which overbore the testimony of the soldiers, might not also have resisted even the appearance of Christ himself? Or, rather, that the obstinacy which led them to overbear conscience in one instance, might not have done it in the other? Justly therefore did God deny, what wantonness, and not reason, might lead them to demand: justly did he give them up to dishonour their own understandings, as well as their moral character, by this mean and ridiculous tale, which brought men to testify what 15
was done while they were asleep.

SECT. CXCVI.

The most that common sense could make of their report, had they deserved the character of honest men, would have been, that they knew nothing of the matter. And we have a thousand times more reason to admire the condescension of God, in sending his apostles to these wicked rulers with such additional proofs and messages, than to censure his providence in preventing Christ's public appearance. May he deliver us from the treachery and corruption of our own hearts! May he give us a holy tenderness and integrity of soul, that we may see truth wheresoever it is, and may follow it whithersoever it leads us; lest God should choose our delusions, and give us up in his righteous judgment to believe a lie, and to think ourselves wise in that credulous infidelity, which is destroying its ten thousands amongst us!

SECT. CXCVII.

Christ appears to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, and, having opened the scriptures to them, makes himself known in breaking of bread. Luke XXIV. 13—33.—

LUKE XXIV. 13.

SECT. CXCVII.

WE are now to give some farther account of that fact which was hinted at in the close of the preceding section, of our Lord's appearing to two of his disciples on a journey: *and* the case was this. *Behold*, (for it is a very observable story), *two of them were travelling that very day* on which Jesus rose from the dead *to a village called Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs*, or somewhat more then seven miles, *from Jerusalem. And* as they walked along, *they discoursed together of all these* wonderful and important *things which had* lately *happened*, and which could not but lie with great weight on their spirits. *And it came to pass, that as they talked* about the sufferings and death of their beloved Lord, and the report which had been spread that morning of his resurrection, *and argued* the point *together* with visible marks of the greatest concern, [a] *Jesus*

Luke XXIV.

13

14

15

LUKE XXIV. 13. AND behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that while they communed *together*, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew

[a] *Argued* the point *together.*] The word συζητειν (as Mr. West observes,) signifies to *discuss*, *examine*, or *inquire together*; and it appears, from the connection, that as they were discoursing on the sufferings, and death, and resurrection of Jesus, the scope of their inquiry was how to reconcile these events with what had been foretold concerning the Messiah, which by the message that the women had just before brought from the angels were particularly called to

near, and went with them.

also himself drew near, as one come from Jerusalem who was going the same way, *and travelled on with them.* SECT. CXCVII.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

But that they might not presently discover who he was, and be prevented by this means from expressing their own thoughts with freedom, he appeared to them in something of a different form and habit from what he usually wore; (compare Mark xvi. 12, p. 594.) and besides what there might be of an uncommon vigour and majesty in his countenance, *their eyes were* so affected and *restrained* by a secret but powerful influence on them, *that* they did not look upon him with that attention and recollection which might have been expected; so that, on the whole, though they were some considerable time in his company, yet *they did not know him.*[b] Luke XXIV. 16

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

And he joined himself to them, as it were by accident, and, after the usual salutation, *said to them*, May I inquire *what are these matters which you are conferring upon between yourselves, as you walk*, and about which you seem to be so much concerned? for I perceive you to be very earnest in discourse, *and* see that you *appear with a sorrowful countenance.* 17

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto

And one [*of the two*], *whose name was Cleophas*,[c] *answered and said to him*, You seem to be come from Jerusalem, and though you may perhaps be no more than a stranger there, yet is it possible that you should be at any loss to know what is the subject of our conversation, 18

(Compare Luke xxiv. 6, 7, p. 586, and xviii. 31—33, p. 256, 257.) Accordingly when Jesus had inquired, ver. 17, *What arguments are these that ye are debating one with another?* (for so Mr. West would render it,) this is the point he took occasion to illustrate and explain (ver. 26, 27,) by shewing them it was necessary, in accomplishment of what was foretold, that the Messiah should suffer these things, and so should enter into his glory: and with this view *he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.* See West's Observ. p. 69—73.)

[b] *They did not know him.*] A different habit, and their having no expectation of seeing him, might, in part, prevent their knowing him: yet, as it is said, *their eyes were restrained from knowing him*, I am ready to think there was something more than this, even some particular agency of God, to divert their eyes from looking stedfastly upon him, or so to affect their memories, as to render them incapable of recollecting who he was. Compare Gen. xxi. 19; Numb. xxii. 31; and 2 Kings vi. 17, 18.

[c] *One of the two whose name was Cleophas.*] It has already been observed, that Cleophas was the same with Alpheus, the father of James the less and Judas, who were two of the apostles; (Luke vi. 15, 16.) See note [e] on John xiv. 22, p. 441, and note [b] on John xix. 25, p. 549.—Some suppose that the other was Luke; but Dr. Lightfoot endeavours to prove it was Peter: (see note [f] on Mat. xxviii. 15, p. 593.) It seems more probable that he was not one of the apostles, but might possibly be one of the number of the seventy, whose name is uncertain.

SECT. CXCVII. Luke XXIV.

and what it is that gives us such concern? *Are you the only person that sojourns in Jerusalem, and is unacquainted with the* extraordinary *things*[d] *which have been done there in* so public
18 a manner within *these* few *days*, that they engross the conversation of the whole city?
19 *And he said to them, What* are those *things* that you refer to? *And they said to him, Those that relate to Jesus*, who was called *the Nazarene: a man who was a prophet* of the most illustrious character, and greatly *powerful* both *in actions and* in *words*; for he wrought the most astonishing miracles, and taught the most instructive and excellent doctrine, which raised him to the highest honour *before God, and all the people* of Israel, among whom he publicly
20 appeared for several months and years. *And* have you not then heard, *how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up* to the Roman governor, and compelled him by their importunity *to* pass *a sentence of death* upon him, *and* so
21 *crucified him* between two robbers? And this must needs be an unspeakable affliction to us, who are two of his disciples: for we not only thought him a Messenger from God, as the old prophets were, *but we* verily *hoped that he had been* the Messiah himself, even *the* very *person who should have delivered Israel* from the power of their enemies, and have established the long-expected kingdom of God among us: but now we are ready to give up all our hopes; for we have seen him on a cross instead of a throne: *and besides all these* melancholy [*occurrences*], though he had given us intimations of his rising again on the third day, yet *this is now the third day since these things were done*, or since he was condemned and crucified, and we have not yet received any convincing evidence of his be-
22 ing risen from the dead. It is true *indeed, some women* among us, *of our society, have greatly surprised us* with an account they brought this morning; *who* tell us, they *were* very *early at the sepulchre* in which he was laid, with an in-
23 tent to embalm him; *And, not having found his body* there, they *came* away in haste to ac-

him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people;

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him:

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre:

23 And when they found not his body,

[d] *Are you the only person that sojourns in Jerusalem, and is unacquainted,* &c.] This is the emphatical import of the words σὺ μόνος παροικεῖς—καὶ οὐκ ἔγνω.

they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.

quaint us with it; *and* besides this, they *say*, SECT. CXCVII.
that they saw also a vision, or apparition *of an-*
gels,[e] *who affirmed him to be alive* again, with Luke xxiv. 23
some other strange and extraordinary circum- 24
stances. Nay, *and some men* too *who were with us*, of our own company, *went* themselves *to the sepulchre, and found* [*it*] to be *even so as the women had said*, that is, that the body was gone, and saw the funeral linen laid in order there; *but him they did not see:* though we are informed that since we left the company, some women have come to them, who affirm that he has actually appeared to them himself, and declared that he was risen, and would shew himself to his disciples: but still we have received no certain proof of it ourselves, so that as yet we know not what to think of it, and cannot but be under great concern about it.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools,

And upon this our Lord, without discovering 25
who *he* was, *said to them* with some warmth, *O*

[e] *And say that they saw also a vision of angels.*] According to the order in which the story is digested in the preceding section, the women did not come to the disciples with the report of what they had seen between the appearance of the angels and that of Christ to them; but had first seen both, and therefore must undoubtedly have mentioned both; it may however be concluded, that (as Luke says on their relating what they had seen, ver. 11, *their words seemed to them as an idle tale, and they believed them not,*) these travellers might apprehend that what the women took for an appearance of Christ, was at most but a vision of angels; (as some imagined with respect to Peter, Acts xii. 15.) and what is added in the next verse, with relation to the men there spoken of, [*but him they did not see,*] may perhaps imply, that the women pretended also to have seen Jesus himself.—But I am now inclined to acquiesce in Mr. West's solution of this difficulty, who supposes it was Joanna, and the other women with her, who only saw the angels and did not see Jesus, that came with this report to the disciples before Mary Magdalene, and those to whom Jesus appeared, arrived with the account that they had seen the Lord. For notwithstanding it is certain, that Mary Magdalene, on Christ's appearing to her, went and acquainted the disciples with it, (Mark xvi. 10, and John xx. 18.) yet, as they might be now assembled together by Peter and John at a different place from that where she met with Peter before, it is no way improbable, that by Mary's going to Peter's lodgings, who was now gone to meet the disciples elsewhere, or by some other accident unknown to us, Joanna and these with her might get thither first with the report of their having seen a vision of angels, who had declared that Jesus was alive. Immediately on hearing which, some men (of whom it is probable Peter might be the first) went away to the sepulchre, and found things in the same order as the women said, but had no sight of Jesus. On whose return, these two disciples that were going to Emmaus left the company; and though as they were setting out, some might inform them, that a report was brought by Mary Magdalene and some other women that they had seen the Lord, they might be as backward to believe it, and as ready to impute it to the power of imagination, as those in whose presence the report was made.—I am obliged to Mr. West for this view of the matter, which represents it in a clearer light than any other scheme proposed before. (See West's Observ. p. 106, 107.)

SECT. CXCVII.

ye *thoughtless* [*creatures,*] *and slow of heart to believe all* the things *that the prophets have* so frequently and clearly *spoken;*[f] which, if you had attentively considered and believed them, would have prevented this surprise! *Was it not necessary*, in order to accomplish those sacred oracles, "which testify before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," (1 Pet. i. 11.) *that the Messiah should suffer* all *these things*, at which you are so much stumbled, *and* [*so*] by his rising from the dead *should enter into his glory?*

Luke xxiv. 25, 26

and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 *And* hereupon *beginning from* the writings of *Moses, and* supporting his discourse with the authority of *all the prophets,*[g] *he interpreted to them*, in a much clearer light than they had ever seen them in before, *the* principal *things* which either had been typified or were foretold *concerning him in all the scriptures.*

27 And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures, the things concerning himself.

28 *And* by this time *they drew near to the village whither they were travelling; and* when they came to the house where they designed to tarry, Jesus, like one that was a stranger, began to take his leave; and making no offer to turn in with them, *he seemed as if he were go-*

28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

[f] *O thoughtless creatures, &c.*] The word ανοητοι is by no means of so bad a sound as that of *fools*, by which we translate it: (see note[m] on Mat. v. 22, Vol. I. p. 217.) Yet as Dr. Bullock justly observes, (in his Vindication of Christ's Resurrection, p. 174.) if the prophecies of the Old Testament had been (as Mr. Collins pretends) only allegorical, there could not have been room for such a heavy charge of stupidity against these disciples for not understanding them. It is, by the way, very weak in Mr. Collins, and some other deists, to urge the *slowness of Christ's friends to believe his resurrection*, as an argument that the proofs of it were defective: on the contrary, as Bishop Chandler well replies, (in his Vindication of Christianity, p. 45, 46.) their believing afterwards carries the greater weight; for it removes all suspicion of a collusion between Christ and them in his lifetime; and also implies an impartial examination of the fact, and the strength of those proofs that vanquished this incredulity.

[g] *Beginning from Moses, and all the prophets.*] It is no way necessary (with Mr. Mede in his ingenious discourse on these words) to suppose, that Christ's sufferings, resurrection, and exaltation, are each of them distinctly foretold in each of those parts of the sacred writings which are mentioned here. It is enough, if Moses gives some intimations concerning him, which succeeding prophets carry on; and if, when all their testimonies are taken together, all these events are expressed by some one or other of them. It was very unbecoming the character of an honest writer, to represent our Lord as here attempting to prove his resurrection from scripture; which Mr. Collins pretends to have been the case. The precise point in view plainly was, to convince them, that there was no reason to be scandalized at the death of one whom they took to be the Messiah; nor in general to look on the report of his resurrection as a monstrous and incredible tale. But that he was actually *risen* was to be proved another way; which accordingly our Lord immediately [illegible] by discovering himself to them

ing farther, intending indeed to do it, if he were not prevented by their request. *But they* even *compelled him* by their friendly importunity to go in with them,[h] *saying*, Let us prevail upon you to *continue* this night *with us*, where we assure you of a most hearty welcome: and as indeed we are so greatly delighted and edified with your company, that we cannot part with you, it may also be inconvenient for you to travel much farther; *for it is* now *towards evening, and the day declines* apace. *And he* complied with their request, and *went in to continue with them.* SECT. CXCVII. Luke XXIV. 29

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

And it came to pass, as he sat down to table with them, he took a cake of *bread*; and though he only appeared as a guest there, he assumed the office of the head of the family, *and* looking up to heaven, *blessed*, or gave thanks over it; *and* then *brake* it, *and gave* [*it*] *to them*, just in the manner he had formerly been used to. 30

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

And they were so surprised at this circumstance, that they now looked upon him more intently than they had done before; and *their eyes were* then *opened*,[i] *and*, to their unutterable astonishment and joy, *they knew him*, and plainly saw that it was Jesus their dear Master: *and* as they were preparing to acknowledge him as such, *he* suddenly became invisible, and *withdrew himself from before them* in a moment.[k] 31

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight.

And they said one to another, How strange is it that we should discover him no sooner! Sure we might easily have known him even by that inimitable spirit and energy in his discourses, so peculiar to himself; for *did not our* very *hearts* 32

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn

[h] *They compelled him*, &c.] It might be rendered, *they pressed him*: (see note [s] on Luke xiv. 23, p. 147.) Every body easily sees how little room there was for any proper compulsion in such a case as this. Probably one of them dwelt at Emmaus, or they were going to an inn, or to some friend's house, where they could use the freedom to introduce this unknown stranger, for whom they had so high a veneration.

[i] *Their eyes were opened.*] I see no reason to conclude (with Cradock and Brennius,) that his undertaking this office of breaking bread, or (with others,) that some peculiar action or gesture in performing it, was the thing that made the discovery. (See note [b] on ver. 16.) The evangelist strongly intimates, that the miraculous influence, which before prevented their knowing him, was removed, though the other circumstances mentioned might awaken them to more attentive observation.

[k] Became invisible, and *withdrew himself from before them.*] Erasmus justly observes, that the word *vanished* leads the mind to think of the person vanishing as a mere spectre; he would therefore render ἀφαντος ἐγένετο as we have done. Beza also observes that ἀπ' αὐτων is more expressive than αὐτους, and signifies our Lord's being *separated from them* by a swift and sudden motion.

SECT. CXCVII.

glow, and *burn within us*,[1] *while he was talking to us by the way, and while he was opening the scriptures to us?*

within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

Luke XXIV. 33 *And* they were not able to conceal such good news, or to defer the publication of that which would give their brethren such a holy transport as they felt in their own breasts; and therefore, late as it was, *they* presently *rose up* from their unfinished meal *that very hour, and* with cheerful speed *returned to Jerusalem*, and told it to the rest of their companions; (compare Mark xvi. 13, p. 594.) among whom they had soon after the pleasure of seeing their Lord again, in the manner related in the next section.

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke xxiv. 13, 14 How delightful a close of so melancholy a day to these pious travellers! A day surely long to be remembered by them and by us! They were on a journey; but they did not amuse themselves on it with any trifling subject of discourse. Their hearts were set upon Christ, and therefore their tongues were employed in speaking of him. And behold, Christ himself, the dear 15 theme of their discourse, makes one among them; he enlightens their eyes and warms their hearts, and at length *makes himself* 30, 31 *known to them in the breaking of bread.*

So may we often be speaking of Christ, from the fulness of our hearts, when we go out, and when we come in! So may he still, in some degree, join himself with us in spirit, guiding our souls into Divine knowledge, and animating them with holy love!

They bear an honourable and just testimony to that great 19 Prophet whom God had raised up for them, as mighty before him both in word and in deed. But they knew not how to see 21 through so dark a cloud: their hopes were almost extinguished, and they could only say, *We trusted this had been he that should have redeemed Israel.* Pitiable weakness! Yet too just an emblem of the temper which often prevails in the pious mind; when the Christian is ready to give up all, if deliverance does not proceed just in the method he expected. Yet was Christ even then delivering Israel in the most glorious and effectual manner, by those very sufferings which gave them such distress. *Verily* thou art *the God of Israel*, and *the Saviour*, when *thou art a God that hidest thyself* from us. (Isa. xlv. 15.)

[1] *Did not our hearts burn within us?*] This reading is far more expressive, as well as far more authentic, than that of some copies which, instead of καιομενη here, have κεκαλυμμενη, *Was not our heart veiled? &c.*—Compare Psal. xxxix. 2 and Jer. xx. 9.

In faithful friendship, and with a plainness well becoming his office, the compassionate Redeemer upbraids them with their slowness of heart to believe these things, when they have received line upon line, precept upon precept, concerning them. How justly do we fall under such a rebuke in many instances! Let us then humbly say, *Lord, increase our faith!* (Luke xvii. 5.) SECT. CXCVII. Ver. 25

We should reasonably have thought ourselves happy in an opportunity of hearing or reading this discourse of Jesus, in which he threw such lustre on the prophecies of the Old Testament, and proved that, according to the tenor of them, it was necessary that the Messiah should thus suffer, and so enter into his glory. As Providence has denied us this satisfaction, let us however improve this general and very important hint, that Moses and all the prophets speak of these things. Let us delight to trace the heavenly beam from its earliest dawn, and to observe how it grew *brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.* May the blessed Spirit, by whom those mysterious predictions were inspired, so direct our inquiries, that every veil may be taken off from our eyes, that we may see Jesus in the Old Testament as well as in the New; and see him in both with that lively fervour of holy affection which may cause our hearts to burn within us! And oh, that we may especially find that, when we surround *his table,* he *makes himself known to us in breaking of bread,* in such a manner, as to *fill* our souls *with all joy,* as well as *peace in believing!* (Rom. xv. 13.) 26, 27 30, 31

SECT. CXCVIII.

The two disciples return to make their report to the apostles; and while they are together, Jesus appears to them the evening after his resurrection. Mark XVI. 14. Luke XXIV.—33—43. John XX. 19—23.

LUKE XXIV.—33.

AND [they] found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

LUKE XXIV.—33.

IT was observed before, concerning Cleophas and the other disciple, to whom Jesus discovered himself at Emmaus, that they immediately arose and returned to Jerusalem, to communicate the joyful news to their brethren there. *And* now when they came thither, *they found the eleven* apostles *assembled,*[a] *and others with them,* who, before these two could begin their story, SECT. CXCVIII. Luke XXIV. 33

[a] *They found the eleven* apostles *assembled.*] As Paul, (1 Cor. xv. 5.) calls the company of the apostles *the twelve,* though Judas, the twelfth person, was dead; so Luke here calls them *the eleven,* though Thomas, the eleventh person, was absent, as evidently appears from John xx. 24, in the next section.

SECT. CXCVIII

were eager on their part to inform the travellers of the satisfaction they had received since they went out: So that, as soon as they appeared,

Luke XXIV. 34 they heard several of the company *saying*, as with one voice, O brethren, here are good tidings, which will make your hearts leap within you; for *the Lord is risen indeed, and has* himself *appeared to Simon* Peter, who is here present to testify the truth of it.[b]

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 *And* the two travellers declared how easily *they* could believe it, and *recounted the things* [*which had happened*] to them *in the way* to Emmaus; *and how*, after many wise and affectionate discourses, *he was* at last *known by them in the breaking of bread*, as they were sitting down to supper. But notwithstanding these repeated testimonies of the resurrection of Christ, yet there were some in the company, whose prejudices were so strong, and their faith so weak, that they did not believe either Peter or them,[c] (compare Mark xvi. 13, p. 594.) though most of them were convinced (as they had just declared) that the Lord was risen indeed.

35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

Mark xvi. 14 *And* quickly *afterwards, as they were speaking of these things* among themselves, *while they were sitting at supper*, [*Jesus*] himself *appeared to the eleven*, who were then altogether, except one of them. And this appearance was attended with some remarkable circumstances, which shall be now related.

MARK XVI. 14. —[And] afterwards [as they thus spake,] he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat. [Luke xxiv. 36.—]

John xx. 19 It was *then on the evening of the same day* on which he rose from the dead, [*which was*,] as we have before observed, *the first day of the week*,

JOHN XX. 19. Then the same day, at evening, being the first *day* of the week,

[b] *And has appeared to Simon* Peter.] None of the evangelists mention any thing of the circumstances of this appearance to Peter; but it has been observed before, (note [f], § cxcvi. p. 593.) that the apostle Paul expressly refers to it, 1 Cor. xv. 5.—The same apostle likewise mentions an appearance of Christ to James; (ibid. ver. 7.) Yet, as nothing is said of his having seen him that day, it much diminishes the credit of the story which Jerom gives us from the gospel of the Nazarenes, that James had vowed to eat nothing after the paschal supper, till Jesus arose; on which account our Lord appeared first to him. None of the apostles seem to have had such a firm expectation of Christ's resurrection as must have been the foundation of such a vow; and the order in which Paul mentions his appearance to James does very ill suit with this story.—Probably Peter was the first man, as Mary Magdalene was the first woman, that was favoured with the view of our risen Saviour.

[c] Some—did not believe, &c.] Mark expresses it in a general way, (chap. xvi. 13.) that *they went and told it unto the residue; neither believed they them:* but we are undoubtedly to understand these words with such a limitation [illegible] paraphrase. See note [g] on M[illegible] page 594; and note [a] on Mat[illegible] § ccii.

SECT. CXCVIII.

when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus [himself] and stood in the midst [of them,] and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you. [Luke xxiv.—36.]

even when the doors of the room, *where the disciples were gathered together, were shut,* and fastened on the inside, *for fear of the Jews;* as they did not know but some officers of the high-priest might come to apprehend them on the scandalous pretence that they had stolen away the body, which was now publicly laid to their charge: it was, I say, at this time and place, that *Jesus himself* on a sudden *came* in, opening the locks or bolts by a miraculous power;[d] *and* he *stood in the midst of them* in his usual form, *and said to them,* with a mild voice and a gracious aspect, All *peace* and happiness *be unto you:* thereby graciously intimating, that he forgave their former cowardice, and would still continue to treat them as his friends, though they knew in their own consciences they had of late behaved themselves in a manner unworthy of that character and relation.

John XX. 19

LUKE XXIV. 37. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

But they were greatly *amazed and terrified* at this sudden unexpected appearance; *and* as they knew the doors of the room were shut, and in the present hurry of their thoughts did not immediately reflect upon the proofs he had so often given of his Divine power, or on the evidences they had but just before received of his resurrection, some of them *suspected that* what *they saw* was only *a spirit,* or a mere airy phantom, and not a real body.

Luke xxiv. 37

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet,

And he said to them, Why are you thus perplexed and *troubled* at the sight of me, *and why do* these doubtful and unreasonable *suspicions arise in your hearts,* as if it only were the appearance of a spirit that you have here before you? *Behold my hands and my feet,* which for

38

39

[d] *Jesus himself came* in, opening the locks or bolts by a miraculous power.] Dr. Wallis (on the Sabbath, p. 25.) thinks the expression of *the doors being shut* intends no more, than that what follows happened *in the evening when the doors are used to be shut up.* But, as the doors are said to have been shut for fear of the Jews, it strongly implies they were fastened within; and that all that was herein miraculous, was the causing them, as of themselves, to fly open, and shut again very suddenly.—Elsner has shown, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 351,) that this is sometimes spoken of by some of the pagan writers, especially those who may be suspected of copying from the evangelists, as the effect of a supernatural power attending the appearance of their deities, or other extraordinary persons, among them.—The argument which the Papists bring from hence, to prove that two bodies may be in the same place at the same time, and consequently one in different places, is so evidently built upon an absurd interpretation of the clause under consideration, as not to deserve any farther notice.

SECT. CXCVIII.

your satisfaction still retain the scars of those wounds which I received on the cross, to convince you *that it is I myself*, and no other: Luke XXIV. *handle me*, if you please, *and see* whether this 39 be not really a solid and substantial body: *for* you know that *a* mere *spirit* or phantom *hath not flesh and bones as you see me have*, but is only an empty form presenting itself to the eye, yet eluding the grasp of any hand.

that it is I myself: handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 *And saying this, he shewed them his hands and his feet, and* even the mark which the spear had left in *his side*, which appeared like a large wound, newly, though perfectly healed: [e] and several of them, and among the rest John the beloved apostle, who records this circumstance, had the curiosity particularly to examine it. John xx. 20 (Compare 1 John i. 1.) And *the disciples therefore were* exceeding *glad*, as it might reasonably be expected they should be, *when they* thus *saw the Lord*, and learnt by such infallible tokens that he was really alive.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them *his* hands and *his* feet [and *his* side.] [John xx. 20.—]

JOHN XX.—20. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

Luke xxiv. 41 *And* for their further satisfaction, *when* [*some of them*] were so transported, that they *as yet believed not* their own eyes *for joy, and were* so *astonished* that they hardly knew where they were, *he said to them, Have you any food here* left, 42 that I may eat with you? *And they gave him* such as they had, even *part of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb*, on which they had been supping 43 just before. *And taking* [*it*], *he eat before them*, that thus they might be fully satisfied that he was actually alive, and had a true and real body. (Compare Acts x. 41.)

LUKE XXIV. 41. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey-comb.

43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

Mark xvi. 14 *And* when *he* had for a while gently *upbraided* and reproved *them for their unbelief, and* for *the hardness of their hearts, that they had not believed* the repeated testimony of *those who had* already *seen him since he was risen* from the dead, and that, even after his own appearance to them, they should be capable of entertaining any fur- John xx. 21 ther doubts: *Then*, that they might be satisfied that he had graciously forgiven them, *Jesus*

MARK XVI.—14. And [he] upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

JOHN XX. 21. Then said Jesus to

[e] *He shewed them his hands and his feet*, &c.] Probably these marks were retained in his body when raised from the dead, on purpose to give the greater satisfaction to the disciples of the truth of his resurrection; though indeed without that additional circumstance, the evidence might have been very satisfactory.

them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so I send you.

said to them again, Peace be unto you: may all prosperity and happiness attend you! *As* [*my*] *Father sent me,* and gave me authority to act in his name, *so also I send you* to act as my apostles, under the important character of my ambassadors to the children of men. SECT. CXCVIII John XX. 21.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them,* and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

And saying this, he in a solemn manner *breathed upon* [*them*], *and said to them* as one that had Divine authority, *Receive ye the Holy Spirit,* and take this as an earnest of what you shall further receive not many days hence: for thus will I shortly breathe out the miraculous influences of my Spirit upon you, in a greater abundance than you have ever yet received them, to qualify and furnish you for this important office; In consequence of which, *whose soever sins you* shall *remit,* or shall declare to be forgiven, *they are remitted* and forgiven *to them;* [*and*] *whose soever* [*sins*] *you* shall *retain,* or shall pronounce to be unpardoned, *they are* assuredly *retained,* and their guilt lies upon them: for you shall have a power, not only of declaring what is lawful or unlawful under the gospel dispensation, but also of sending or removing miraculous punishments, and of discerning the spirits of men in such perfection, as to be able with certainty to declare to particular persons in question, whether they be, or be not, in a state of pardon and acceptance with God. (See note [h] on Mat. xvi. 19. vol. I. p. 485.) 22

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

23

And after this discourse with his disciples, at his first appearance to them, Jesus departed from them for that time, and left them to spend the rest of the evening in those delightful exercises of devotion which this great occasion had so natural a tendency to inspire.

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH pleasure let us echo back the words of the apostles, and join in that glad anthem which so well suits a resurrection-day, *The Lord is risen,* he is risen *indeed.* We owe our daily praises to God, for the abundant demonstration he has given us of so important a fact, for every appearance of Christ to his disciples, and for all the *infallible tokens* by which *he shewed himself* to be *alive after his passion.* (Acts i. 3.) Luke xxiv. 34

He came with peace and blessings in his mouth; he came to disperse their fears, and to assure them of his forgiving love. verse 36—41

SECT. CXCVIII. How strong were those prejudices which so hardly yielded to such convincing proofs! And how rich was that grace which condescended to overcome them!

John XX. 22. Christ breathed on the apostles, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. May he also breathe on our souls, and fill us with that glorious and Divine gift, which, if it qualified the apostles for their extraordinary office, may much more furnish us for the common duties of life! May we try our state by the characters which they have laid down in their inspired writings; in which sense, among others, we may assure ourselves, that, if they have
23 declared our sins to be remitted, they are remitted: and if indeed they are so, we need not be much concerned by whom they are retained. Vain and arrogant men may claim a despotic power, which God never gave, and which these words are far from implying. But, whatsoever be the sentence they may pass, *they whom God blesseth, are blessed indeed.* (1 Chron. xvii. 27.) May we always esteem it *a very small thing* to be *judged of man's judgment*, (1 Cor. iv. 3.); pitying rather than resenting, the rashness of those who claim any such discretionary sacerdotal power, as can give the real penitent any alarm, or the impenitent any encouragement to continue in sin!

SECT. CXCIX.

Christ appears to the eleven a second time, a week after the former; particularly offering to Thomas, who had before been absent, the most sensible proofs of his resurrection. John XX. 24—29.

JOHN XX. 24.

SECT. CXCIX. John XX. 24. WE mentioned in the last section Christ's appearing to his disciples on the evening of that day on which he arose; *but* it is farther to be observed, that *Thomas, one of the twelve*, who was also *called Didymus*, or the twin brother, *was not with them* at that time *when Jesus*
25 *came. The other disciples therefore*, as soon as they met with him, *told him*, in a transport of joy, *We have seen the Lord* with our own eyes, and consequently can have no farther doubt of the truth of his resurrection, for he has condescended to shew us the very marks of those wounds he received on the cross. *But he said to them*, This is a matter of too great importance for me to believe on any report, even on yours; and more is necessary to convince me

JOHN XX. 24. BUT Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them,

Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

of the truth of it, than merely a transient sight of mine own eyes; for, *unless I shall* evidently *see in his hands*, as you say you have done, *the mark of the nails, and* more than that, *shall put my finger upon the* very individual *mark of the nails*,[a] *and put my hand upon* the very scar made by the spear in *his side*,[b] *I will not* by any means, or on any testimony whatsoever, *believe* his resurrection. SECT. CXCIX. John XX. 25.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

And, as there was a great degree of faulty obstinacy in such a resolution, our Lord left him a whole week under the perplexity which it must necessarily give him: but *after eight days*, or on that day seven-night from our Lord's rising, *his disciples were again within* doors as before, *and Thomas* was *with them*; [*and*] *Jesus came* to them again; *the doors being shut* and fastened, as in the former instance; *and* suddenly throwing them open, and in a moment shutting them again, he *stood in the midst* of them, *and said* as in his former gracious salutation, *Peace be unto you!* 26

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

And *then*, to let them see that he was not unacquainted with what had lately passed among them in his absence, as well as to convince the over-scrupulous disciple, *he said to Thomas, Reach* forth *thy finger hither, and behold*, and examine *my hands; and reach thine hand* hither, *and put it on my side*;[c] *and be not incredulous* any longer, *but believe* on this evidence at least which addresses itself at once to so many of thy senses. 27

28 And Thomas

And Thomas, overwhelmed at once with such 28

[a] *And shall put my finger upon the mark of the nails.*] I am sensible, it might seem more elegant, with the Prussian translators, to wave the repetition, and to render it, *and put my finger into it*: but, on farther reflection, there seems to be a beauty in this repetition, which admirably represents the language of a positive man, declaring again and again what he insisted upon; which I have therefore endeavoured to express in the paraphrase, in terms which such persons often use,

[b] *And put my hand upon his side.*] So I would choose to render it, rather than *into his side*; agreeable to Dr. Stevenson's just criticism, that εις here signifies *upon*; as εις την γην (John viii. 6.) is *upon the ground*; and εις την χειρα αυτης (Luke xv. 22.) *upon his hand*. See Dr. Stevenson against Woolston on Christ's Miracles, p. 324

[c] *Reach* forth *thy finger hither*, &c.] It is observable, that Spinoza himself could find out no more plausible objection against this evidence of the resurrection of Christ, than to say, that the disciples were deceived in what they imagined they saw, heard and felt; (vie de Spin. p. 32.) which, if granted, would be in effect to allow that no men could be competent judges of any fact whatsoever relating to their own sensations, and consequently would overthrow all human testimony in courts of judicature and elsewhere.

SECT. CXCIX.

abundant demonstration, and such humble condescension, fell under the conviction in a moment; and, instead of entering on any farther scrutiny,[d] *answered and said to him*, in the utmost transport of astonishment and joy, *My Lord and my God!* as if he should have said, I do not only now acknowledge thee to be Jesus my Lord, infallibly risen from the dead, but I confess thy Divine knowledge and power, and prostrate myself before thee, as the great incarnate Deity, the glorious Emmanuel.[e]

John XX. 28. answered and said unto him, My Lord, and my God.

29 *Jesus says to him, Thomas, thou hast believed, because thou hast seen me*, and hast received these sensible demonstrations of my resurrection; and it is well: but still more *happy are they who have not seen* me themselves, *and [yet] have believed* on the credible testimony of others; for they have shewn a greater degree of candour and humility, which renders the faith it produces so much the more acceptable.[f]

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 25. WE most evidently see in this instance of Thomas, as well as in many circumstances of the story mentioned above, how far the apostles were from being rashly credulous in the im-

[d] Instead of entering on any farther scrutiny.] It is not said that he actually *touched the wounds;* and our Lord afterwards says, (ver. 29.) that his belief was built on sight; which seems to intimate, that this condescension of our Lord, together with the additional evidence arising from the knowledge which he plainly had of that unreasonable demand which Thomas had made in his absence, quite overcame him: a turn of mind exceeding natural to so frank a temper as that of Thomas appears to have been.

[e] *My Lord, and my God!*] The irrefragable argument arising from these words in proof of the deity of our blessed Lord (which so many good writers have stated at large), cannot be evaded by saying, that these words are only an exclamation of surprise, as if he had said, *Good God, is it indeed thus!* For it is expressly declared, he spoke these words to him: and, no doubt, Christ would severely have reproved him if there had not been just reason to address him thus.

[f] *Happy are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.*] If it be queried, Why *a greater blessedness* is pronounced on those who believe on more slender evidence; it may be answered, that our Lord by no means intended to assert, that every one who *believes without seeing*, is *happier* than any one *believing on sight;* for then the meanest Christian now would be more happy than the greatest of the apostles; but only, that where the effects of that faith were equal, it argued greater simplicity, candour, and wisdom, to yield to reasonable evidence without seeing, than could be argued merely from having believed on sight after sufficient evidence of another kind had been proposed. It was therefore in effect telling Thomas, "It would have been more acceptable "to him, if he had not stood out so long:" and it was doing it in such a manner as would be most calculated for the comfort and encouragement of believers in future ages, to whom, in many of his speeches to the apostles themselves, our Lord expresses a most obliging and affectionate regard.

portant fact of Christ's resurrection. It is apparent, they erred in the contrary extreme; yet our gracious Lord condescended to satisfy scruples which were carried to an extravagance. He renewed his visit, and at the same time renewed his salutation too. *Peace be unto you* was still his language; nor did he only speak, but act, as one who wished it, and was determined to give it. SECT. CXCIX. Ver. 26.

What peace must it administer to the mind of this good man, when his Lord said, *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thine hand, and put it on my side; and be not faithless, but believing!* Evidently did he hereby shew, not only that he was risen from the dead, but that he circumstantially knew those events which had passed in his bodily absence, and needed not human information. Let us then ever behave ourselves as in the presence of Christ. Let us act, and speak, and think, in such a manner as may bear his inspection; and struck with these united demonstrations of wisdom, power and grace, let us prostrate ourselves before him, and say, *Our Lord, and our God!* thus *honouring the Son as we honour the Father,* (John v. 23.) and adoring the indwelling Deity through this veil of flesh, in which it has been pleased to enshrine itself, and kindly to attemper, though not entirely to conceal, its rays. 27 28

Though we have not those sensible manifestations which were granted to Thomas, let it suffice us that the apostles were the *appointed witnesses* of all these things; and *what they saw with their eyes, and their hands handled of the word of life, that have they declared unto us;* (1 John i. 1, 3.) Let us thankfully receive so convincing a testimony. Let us shew an upright and candid mind in accepting such evidence as the wisdom of God has seen fit to give us; remembering, that a truly rational faith is the more acceptable to God, in proportion to the difficulties which it is able to surmount; and that there are peculiar blessings in store for them *who have not seen and yet have believed.* 29

SECT. CC.

Christ discovers himself to Peter and several other disciples at the sea of Tiberias, while they were fishing there. John XXI. 1—14

JOHN XXI. 1.

AFTER these SOME time *after these things,*[a] between the last interview he had with the apostles at

[a] Some time *after these things.*] Grotius thinks this whole chapter was written by some elders of the church of Ephesus, and added to the rest of the book by the approbation of that society, as agreeable to the relations which they had heard from the mouth of St. John: and Le Clerc follows him in this conjecture: but Dr.

SECT. CC. John XXI. 1. Jerusalem, and the public appearance which he afterwards made to the whole body of his disciples, *Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples, at the sea of Tiberias,* near that mountain in Galilee where he had appointed to meet them: (Mat. xxviii. 16, sect. ccii.) *And* the manner in which *he* now *manifested* [*himself*] to them was *thus:*

things, Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberius: and on this wise shewed he *himself:*

2 *Simon Peter, and Thomas* who was *called Didymus, and Nathanael* who was an inhabitant *of Cana,* a town *in Galilee* often mentioned in the foregoing history,[b] *and* also *the* [*two sons*] *of Zebedee,* James and John, *and two other of his disciples* with them,[c] *were* one day *together* in Galilee; whither they were returned by Christ's direction, to wait for the accomplishment of what he had promised, that they should see him on a certain mountain in those parts, and where they expected in a few days to meet with most of their brethren. (Compare Mat. xxviii. ver. 7, 10, sect. cxcv. and ver. 16, sect. ccii.)

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 And while they were thus waiting, *Simon Peter,* that their time might not lie on their hands, and that he might make some provision for his own support, and for the entertainment of his friends, *says to them, I* will *go a fishing*:[d] and *they say to him, We also* will *go* along *with thee,* and give thee what assistance we can. *They went out* therefore, *and immediately took ship, and* spent not only *that* evening, but all the following *night,* in throwing their nets; but though it was the properest

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that

Mill has taken pains to invalidate it; (Prolegom. p. 249.) and the beginning of ver. 24. destroys the force of Grotius's argument from the latter part of it. See note[f] on that verse, at the close of the next section.

[b] *Nathanael of Cana in Galilee.*] There is no doubt but this Nathanael is the person mentioned before, John i. 45.—Dr. Lightfoot, (Hor. Heb. on Mat. x. 3.) Mr. Fleming, (Christol. Vol. II. p. 176.) and some others, take him to have been *Bartholomew the apostle;* but I think they give no convincing reason for that opinion.

[c] *Two other of his disciples.*] It is indeed uncertain who these two disciples were; though Dr. Lightfoot conjectures they were Andrew and Philip, (Hor. Heb. in loc.) which is not improbable, as they were both inhabitants of Bethsaida, near the sea of Tiberias. (John i. 44.) It is however a strange argument against it, to say, "that John must be one, though he is not here mentioned," when he is so well known to have been one of the sons of Zebedee, who are numbered here among those that were present.

[d] *I will go a fishing.*] It appears from this story, that several of the apostles were now returned to Galilee, where Christ had appointed to meet them; which shews that the discourse, (Luke xxiv. 49. sect. ccii.) in which our Lord commanded them to *continue at Jerusalem till the Holy Ghost fell upon them,* must come in after this chapter, and not before it, as it is placed in many harmonies.

night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved, saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him,* (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

time for fishing, yet *they caught nothing* worth the mentioning. SECT. CC.

And when the morning was now come, Jesus appeared and *stood upon the shore, nevertheless, the disciples,* who had no expectation of seeing him there, being at some distance from him, and it not being yet perfectly light, *knew not that it was Jesus.* *Then* as they approached within call, *Jesus said to them, Have you any thing to eat,* my *lads?* or have you taken fish enough to furnish out a meal? *They answered him, No;* we have been toiling here all night in vain. *And he said to them,* Let me then advise you to *throw the net on the right side of the ship, and you will* undoubtedly *find* [*so...*] And willing to try at least whether this stranger conjectured right, *they threw* the net *therefore* as he had directed them; *and now they were not able to draw it* up into the ship again, *on account of the multitude of fishes* which they had inclosed in it.[e] John XXI. 4–6

Then John, *that disciple whom Jesus* peculiarly *loved,* when he saw such astonishing success after all their fruitless toil and disappointment before, *says unto Peter, it is* undoubtedly *the Lord,* who has, on this occasion renewed that miracle which he wrought in thy ship some years ago, when he first called us to attend him. (See Luke v. 4—10, Vol. I. sect. xxxiv.) *Simon Peter therefore hearing* him say, with the appearance of such good reason, that *it was the Lord,* was so transported, that he immediately *girded on his coat, (for he was* in a manner *naked,* have nothing on but his inner-garment,[f]) *and threw himself* directly *into the sea,* and swam to shore, that he might pay his earliest duty to his dear Lord, and testify his joy in the condescending visit he was making 7

[e] *They were not able to draw it* up into the ship again, &c.] This was not merely a demonstration of the power of our Lord, but a kind providential supply for them and their families, which might be of service to them when they waited afterwards in Jerusalem according to his order; and it was likewise a sort of emblematical representation of the great success which should attend their attempts to catch men in the net of the gospel. Compare Luke v. 9, 10, Vol. I. p. 196.

[f] In a manner *naked,* having nothing on but his inner-garment.] It is of great importance, in order to vindicate several stories in scripture, which the ignorance or malice of some modern writers has charged with indecency, to observe, that among the Jews, (as Grotius and many others have shewn) they were said to be *naked* who had only an under garment on. Compare 1 Sam. xix. 24; 2 Sam. vi. 20; Isa. xx. 2, 3; and Acts xix. 16.

SECT. CC. John XXI. 8.

them. *And the other disciples*, making the best of their way, *came* to him as fast as they could *with the boat, drawing the net [full] of fishes* after them; *for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits*, or one hundred yards.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

9 *As soon then as they came ashore, they saw a fire of burning coals laid* ready there, *and fish laid upon it, and* a sufficient quantity of *bread* at hand; which Jesus had miraculously prepared, that they might see how easily he could make provision for them, even when they were destitute of the ordinary means of supply.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 And that due notice also might be taken of the miraculous draught they had now made, *Jesus said to them, Bring* hither [*some*] *of the fish which you have now taken.*

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 And *Simon Peter went aboard, and*, with the help of his brethren, *drew the net to land*; and it was *full of great fishes*, which, upon taking the number of them, they found to be no less than *an hundred and fifty-three; and though they were so many* and so great, yet *the net was not broke.*

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Then *Jesus said to them, Come* [*and*] *refresh yourselves*, [s] after the fatigue you have had for so many hours. *And none of the disciples presumed to ask him, Who art thou?* or took upon them to inquire how he came thither, or whence he procured the provision he then offered them? well *knowing that it was the Lord*, though he conversed with them in something of a distant manner, but left him to proceed in his own way, as judging it most respectful to leave it to him to direct the discourse to more intimate and particular subjects, in such a manner, and by such degrees, as he should think fit; which he presently after did.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 *Jesus therefore came and took bread*, as the master of the feast, *and*, having blessed it, as he used to do, *gave* [*it*] to each of *them; and likewise* gave them some of the broiled *fish.*

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 And *this was now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to* such a number of *his disciples* at once, [h] *after he was risen from the dead;* and

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

[s] *Come and refresh yourselves.*] So I choose to render the word ἀριστήσατε rather than *dine*; as Homer sometimes uses ἄριστον to signify *a morning's meal.*

[h] *The third time he shewed himself to such a number, &c.*] Grotius explains

it was attended with some very remarkable and instructive circumstances, which will be particularly mentioned in the next section. SECT. CC.

IMPROVEMENT.

CHRIST first called these disciples when they were employed in the duties of their proper profession in life, and he now manifests himself to them while they were so engaged; perhaps particularly intending thereby to encourage an honest industry, in which indeed we are far more likely to enjoy his presence, and to converse with him, than when we throw away our time in idleness and inactivity. Ver. 1, 2

A while he leaves them to labour in vain, that when the plentiful draught of fishes came, it might be the more remarkable. Sometimes he may deal thus with his ministers, in their endeavours to catch men; that we may be convinced thereby, to whose power we owe our success, and may not *sacrifice to* our own *net, or burn incense to* our own *drag*. (Hab. i. 16.) 3—6

All the disciples rejoiced at his appearance; but Peter was the foremost to cast himself at his feet. Conscious that so *much had been forgiven him*, he is solicitous to shew that he *loves much*. (Luke vii. 47.) So may the remembrance of our miscarriages work upon us, to make us more vigorous in Christ's service, and to inspire us with such zeal and affection as *many waters may not be able to quench, nor the floods to drown!* (Cant. viii. 7.) 7

Let us not imagine this miracle was merely intended for a demonstration of Christ's Divine power over all that *passeth through the paths of the sea*; (Psal. viii. 8.) it was also the work of wisdom and bounty. By the sale of so many large and fine fishes a seasonable provision was made for the subsistence of his disciples at Jerusalem, while they were there *waiting for the descent of the Spirit*. (Luke xxiv. 49.) Let every circumstance 11—12

this of the *third day* of his appearance; for he had first appeared to several on the day of his resurrection; then, after eight days, he came to his disciples, when Thomas was present; and now again he shewed himself at the sea of Tiberias. And it is plainly necessary that the words should be understood with some such limitation, to make them consistent with the accounts given by the other evangelists and St. Paul; which, when laid together, will prove that this was indeed at least the seventh appearance that Jesus had made since his resurrection: For he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, (Mark xvi. 9.); and then to the women as they returned from the sepulchre, (Mat xxviii. 9.); after this he was seen of Peter, (1 Cor. xv. 5.); and then the same day by the two disciples that were going to Emmaus, (Luke xxiv. 1—31); and again the same evening he appeared to the disciples when Thomas was absent, (John xx. 19.); on that day seven-night he appeared to the eleven when Thomas was with them, (John xx. 26.); and now after these things he shewed himself a seventh time to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias (John xxi. 1.)—But, as John had particularly mentioned before, the appearances which Jesus made to his disciples when they were together, (John xx. 19. 26.) it seems most reasonable to conclude, that he reckons this the third as referring to these.

SECT. CC. of this kind encourage us to trust him, as the Lord of nature and of grace, who will withhold from us no necessary supply of either, while we are making it our humble and faithful care to promote his glory.

SECT. CCI.

Christ discourses with Peter at the sea of Tiberias, and gives a remarkable prophecy concerning the death of that apostle. John XXI, 15—24.

JOHN XXI. 15.

SECT. CCI. John XXI. 15

WHEN therefore they had made a plentiful *meal* on this kind provision which Jesus had supplied them with, there happened some circumstances in his succeeding discourse with his disciples which may be worthy of more distinct notice; and particularly this: *Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon* [*son*] *of Jonas, dost thou love me more than these* do?[a] Or wilt thou now maintain that thou hast such a zealous regard for me above any of thy brethren, as thou once didst profess, when thou saidst, that though all should forsake me, thou wouldst not do it? (Mat. xxvi. 33, p. 477.) *He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee* sincerely, though I presume not to say more than any of my brethren [*Jesus*] *said to him*, If so, *feed my lambs*;[b] and as I shall favour thee so far as

JOHN XXI. 15.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

[a] *Dost thou love me more than these* do?] The original words, πλειον τουτων, are ambiguous; and, besides the sense I have given them, they might signify, *Dost thou love me more than* thou lovest *these* nets, and other instruments of thy trade; so as to prefer my service to any worldly advantages? In this sense Dr. Whitby explains them, and argues for it from this consideration, that otherwise Peter could not have appealed to Christ, that he did thus love him; since it was impossible for him exactly to judge of the proportion between *his own love to Christ* and *that of his brethren*. But that learned commentator did not observe how modestly the reply is adjusted on that head. Peter only answers, *Yea, Lord, (for assuredly, Lord,) thou knowest that I love thee;* but does not add, *more than these*. And this beautiful circumstance in the answer shews how much he was humbled and improved by the remembrance of his fall.

[b] *Feed my lambs.*] The paraphrase shews how fair a sense may be given to these words, without supposing they invest Peter with any such distinguished authority in the church, as, contrary to the most convincing arguments, the Papists suppose, and make this supposition the corner-stone of their Babel. Bellarmin's distinction betwen lambs and sheep, as signifying the laity and clergy, is very trifling, nor can any example of the like distinction be produced. It is much more natural to suppose in general, that lambs here, (as in Isa. xl. 11, and many other places,) may signify the weakest of the flock, which, by the way, it is by no means to be taken for granted that the

to commit my church, in part, to thy apostolic care, remember that the most acceptable way of expressing thy love to me, will be by taking care even of the weakest and feeblest of my flock. SECT. CCI. John XXI. 16

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

And, to impress this with the greater force upon his mind, *he says to him again the second time, Simon* [*son*] *of Jonas, dost thou* indeed *love me? He answers him* as he had done before, *Yea, Lord*, I appeal to thee for the sincerity of that regard which I have to thee, *thou knowest that I* truly *love thee.* [*Jesus*] *says to him* again, *Feed* then *my sheep* with tenderness and care, and thereby demonstrate the truth of thine affection to me.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

And, that it might never be forgot by him, 17 or any that were present, *he says to him the third time, Simon* [*son*] *of Jonas*, wilt thou abide by what thou hast said? *Dost thou* truly *love me*, and will that love of thine bear the severest trial? *Peter was* exceedingly *grieved, that he said to him the third time, Dost thou love me? And he said to him* with great earnestness, My dear *Lord, thou knowest all things;* thou seest the very hearts of men, and, seeing mine, *thou knowest that I* do indeed *love thee;* though my late lamentable fall might justly bring it into question, and my repeated denial of thee renders me worthy of such a rebuke as this repeated inquiry implies. *Jesus says to him*, Well, Peter, I acknowledge thou dost indeed love me, and know how to distinguish between frailty and treachery; and therefore I not only own thee as a disciple, but confirm thee in thine apostolic office, again requiring thee to *feed my sheep;* and be assured, that I consider thy zeal for the edification and comfort of my church, as the most ac-

laity always are. So that, on the whole, this argument for the Pope's supremacy seems almost as contemptible as that which some writers of that communion have drawn from these words, to prove that heretics, though princes, are to be put to death by authority derived from Peter; because feeding the flock implies a power of killing wolves. (See Boyle's Philos. Comment. Vol. I. p. 82.)—I shall only add, that some have observed, that ἀρνια, being the diminutive of ἀρνα, signifies *the least of my lambs;* and, if we interpret this as an intimation of the care which Peter, as a minister of Christ, was to take of little children, it seems perfectly congruous to the wisdom and tenderness of the great Shepherd of the sheep, to give so particular an injunction concerning it; as I have shewn at large in my Ten Sermons on the Power and Grace of Christ, Serm. vii. p. 176, *&c. seq.* 2d. edit.

sect. ceptable token thou canst possibly give of thy
ccl. love to me.

John XXI. 18 And indeed thou shalt approve that love, not only by labours, but by sufferings too; for *verily, verily, I say unto thee*, and would have thee to remember it as what shall surely come to pass, that *when thou wast* a *young* man, *thou didst gird thyself, and walk about* without controul, *whithersoever thou wouldst; but when thou art grown old*,[c] *thou shalt stretch out thine hands, and another shall gird thee*, as a helpless prisoner, *and* at length shall *carry thee whither thou wouldst not* naturally incline to go, even to those sufferings to which flesh and blood have the strongest aversion: yet I know that, notwithstanding thy late miscarriage, thy love to me will bear thee through all.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldst not.

19 And *this he said, signifying* and intimating *by what kind of death he should glorify God*; namely, that he should suffer martyrdom, and die with his hands stretched out on a cross. *And, having said this*, yet farther to illustrate and explain it, *he says to him, Follow me* then, as I now walk along, and shew that thou art willing to conform to my example, and to follow me even to the death of the cross.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 *And Peter* did so with great alacrity; but *turning about*; he *saw that* other *disciple whom Jesus loved*, silently *following him*, in humble token of his readiness likewise to suffer the greatest extremities in the service of so dear a Master.[d] Now, by the way, it may be recol-

20 Then Peter turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following;

[c] *When thou art grown old.*] Peter's crucifixion is said to have happened about forty years after this; but the time is not exactly and certainly known.

[d] Silently *following* him, in humble token of his readiness, &c.] There is a spirit and tenderness in this plain passage, which I can never read without the most sensible emotion. Christ orders Peter to follow him, in token of his readiness to be crucified in his cause. John stays not for the call: he rises, and follows too; but he says not one word of his love and his zeal. He chose that the action only should speak that; and when he records this circumstance, he tells us not what that action meant; but with great simplicity relates the fact only. If here and there a generous heart that, like his own, glows with love to Christ, sees and emulates it, be it so; but he is not solicitous men should admire it. It was addressed to his Master; and it was enough that he understood it.—And can any one be himself base enough to imagine that such a man could spend his life in promoting a pernicious falsehood, (for such in the second edition of the ninth of my ten sermons, I largely prove the apostolic testimony to be, if it were a falsehood,) and at last, in his old age, when his relish for every thing but goodness and immortality was gone, would so solemnly attest it, as he does in the conclusion of his gospel? May God deliver every one that reads this, from a head so fatally beclouded by the corruptions of the heart!

which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

lected, that this was the apostle John, for whom our Lord had a peculiar kindness, *who also at the paschal supper lay in his bosom, and said to him, Lord, who is he that will betray thee?* (See John xiii. 25, p. 417.) SECT. CCI. John XXI. 20.

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do?*

Peter therefore observing this disciple, and *seeing him* follow Jesus in the same manner as he did himself, though he was not called to it, *says unto Jesus, Lord, what* [*shall*] *this man* [*do,*] and what is to become of him? Must he, who is now following with me, partake of the like sufferings, and in like manner testify his love by dying for thee? 21

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? Follow thou *me.*

Jesus says to him, Is that any immediate concern of thine, Peter? *If I will that he tarry,* or continue alive, *till I come* in power and great glory to execute the judgment I have threatened on mine enemies, *what* [*is that*] *to thee,* or to any one else? *Follow thou me:* mind thou thine own duty, and endeavour to prepare for thine own sufferings; and pry not with a vain curiosity into secret events which may befal him, or any other of thy brethren. 22

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

Now as this answer was not rightly understood, *this saying therefore went abroad among the brethren,* or the other followers of Christ, *that this disciple should not die*[c] and the advanced age to which he lived gave some farther colour for it: *but* it was entirely built upon a mistake; for *Jesus did not say to him,* or of him, *that he should not die; but* only, as it was expressed before, *If I will that he tarry,* or continue alive, *till I come, what* [*is that*] *to thee?* 23

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

And *this is the disciple who testifies concerning these things, and hath written them* as above: *and* since he was an eye-witness to them, and has not failed, in a proper manner, to produce in the churches the credentials necessary to prove the veracity and exactness of his writings, *we* certainly *know that his testimony is true,* and doubt not but every candid reader will receive it accordingly.[f] 24

[c] *This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren,* &c.] That there was such a notion and tradition among the ancients, Fabricius has particularly shewn, Cod. Apoc. Nov. Test. Vol. III. p. 533.

[f] *We know that his testimony is true.*] Grotius would argue from the plural number in these words, (Annot. in John xx. 30.) that this last chapter was not written by John himself, but was added to his gospel by some other hands. (See note [a] on John xxi. 1, p. 611.) But it is

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. CCI. Ver. 15—17.

WHAT if our Lord Jesus Christ should put the same question to us that he did to Peter, in this remarkable passage, and should thus repeat it again and again? Are there none of us who should be at a loss for an answer? None of us to whom he might say, *I know that you have not the love of Christ in you?*—Or are there none of us who apprehend, that, if we had ourselves been thus pressed, we could, at the very best, only have said, *Lord, thou that knowest all things, knowest that I cannot tell whether I love thee or not?*—Blush, and be confounded, O my soul, if thou must reply with such uncertainty to a question of so great importance, and in a case where all the ardour of the heart might be so justly expected!

17 But are there not still some of us who through Divine grace could reply with pleasure, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that*, notwithstanding all the unhallowed and lamented infirmities of our lives, *we* do indeed *love thee?*—And, if we are thus really conscious to ourselves of such an unfeigned affection, let it be our daily joy, that he who implanted this Divine principle in our hearts, discerns and sees it there; and, knowing all things, he perfectly knows this, however we may be suspected, however we may be censured.

16 Let us learn also, by what method we are to express our love, according to our ability and opportunity; even by feeding his sheep, and promoting the interest and edification of his church. Let ministers especially do it; and let them not forget those 15 dear creatures, the lambs of the flock. Jesus the compassionate Shepherd, as we see, did not forget them; but taught his servants with the greatest tenderness both by his precepts, and by his example, to *gather them in* their *arms, and carry them in their bosom.* (Isa. xl. 11.)

21 Happy are those ministers who, instead of indulging a vain curiosity in things wherein they are not at all, or but very little concerned, are spending their lives in such faithful services; *feeding the flock of God;* and *taking the oversight of it, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;* that *when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they may receive an unfading crown of glory:* (1 Pet. v. 2, 4.) A crown which will in-

plainly said in the beginning of this verse, that it was he *who testified and wrote these things;* and besides, that we have frequent instances of the like change of numbers, (see Rom. vii. 14, and 1 Thess. ii. 18.) it is evident from the words, *I suppose*, in the next verse, that only one person speaks. So that no more appears to be intended here, than if he had said, "We universally allow, that what is testified by a credible eye-witness, and asserted by him under his hand, must be admitted as a valid testimony, and pass for unexceptionable evidence: this is the case here; and therefore regard it accordingly."

finitely more than repay, not only their labours, but their suf- SECT. CCI.
ferings too!

Happy Peter, who, having worn out his better years in the service of Christ, courageously stretched out his aged arms to Ver 18.
be bound, and, being borne away to tortures and death, shed the last slow ebb of his blood as a martyr for him who had loved him and given himself for him.—And not less happy the beloved 20—23
disciple, so willing to hazard his life in the same cause; though he was not in fact called to lay it down as a martyr! Our gracious Lord, who sees every purpose, and every affection, as it rises in the heart, favourably accepts of the willing mind, and will, through the riches of his grace, entitle them to the reward of equal suffering, who have waited with a like readiness, though they have not been called out to the severity of the like trial.

SECT. CCII.

Christ appears to the whole body of the disciples at the appointed mountain in Galilee; and afterwards meets the apostles several times at Jerusalem, and discourses with them concerning the affairs of his kingdom, Mat. XXVIII. 16, *to the end.* Mark XVI. 15—18. Luke XXIV. 44—49. Acts I.—2, 3.

MAT. XXVIII. 16.

THEN the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

MAT. XXVIII. 16.

NOW, quickly after the late interview which SECT. CCII.
Jesus had with his disciples at Jerusalem, *the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to a* certain
mountain not far from the sea of Tiberias, *where* Mat. XXVIII. 16
Jesus had appointed to meet *them.* "And he "appeared to them, and above five hundred "brethren at once, who came together from "all parts of the country on that important oc- "casion." *And having seen him, they* bowed 17
down and *worshipped him;* and *though some* of the company *had doubted* at first, yet they were afterwards fully convinced. [a] "And the greater

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

[a] *Though some* of the company *had doubted* at first, &c.] There is no room to think, that this refers to some of the apostles, when Christ had so lately satisfied the most incredulous among them; but we are certainly to understand it (as Mr. West has fully shewn) of some that were in company with them, though Matthew has not mentioned them. (See West's Observ. p. 25, 29.) Yet still it is not easy to imagine how any of the rest of this company could continue to doubt of the truth of Christ's resurrection when they actually saw him, and that in the presence of so many others; a circumstance incomparably more convincing to each, than if he had appeared to any one alone. I therefore chose to render and paraphrase the words οἱ δὲ ἐδίστασαν, as above. Those learned critics, Albert. (Observ. p. 163, 164.) and Bos, (Exercit. p. 23.) have produced many instances in which οἱ is put for τινες. And all the difficulty is removed, if we

SECT. CCII. Mat. XXVIII. 17

" part of them continued alive, as witnesses of " the truth of his resurrection for several years " after;[b] though others of them died in a short " time, and went to their glorified and tri- " umphant Lord in heaven." See 1 Cor. xv. 6. Thus did he manifest himself in Galilee to a considerable number of his disciples at once; " and after that, he appeared to James,[c] and " then (as we shall see hereafter) to all the " apostles." See 1 Cor. xv. 7.

But though he shewed himself thus openly to his disciples, " he did not publicly appear at " any time to all the people; nor indeed did he " shew himself, in any other instance, to so " large an assembly even of his own disciples: " but in the several appearances he made, he " chiefly conversed with the apostles, and con- " fined his visits to those witnesses that were " chosen before by God to attest the truth of " his resurrection; who had frequent opportu- " nities of a free conversation with him, and, " as we have seen before, (Luke xxiv. 30, 42, " 43; and John xxi. 12, 13.) did eat and drink " with him after he rose from the dead." See Acts x. 41.

Acts I. 2 And at these times of his conversing with them,[d] he more particularly opened to them

Acts I. 2.—[*And*]

allow a small change in the tense, and take the rendering of the Prussian Testament, *Even they who had before doubted*; or, which is much the same, *though some had doubted.*

[b] Several years after.] It is generally granted, that the First Epistle to the Corinthians was written at least twenty years after Christ's resurrection; and Paul there tells us, that the greater part of these five hundred then continued alive. And by the way, it was a wise and gracious dispensation of Divine Providence, to continue their lives so long, as each of them, wherever Providence led them, would be an authentic witness of that important fact, the resurrection of our Lord, the great fundamental of the Christian faith.

[c] After that he appeared to James.] It is probable this was James the son of Alpheus, who was still living when the apostle Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, whereas the other James, the son of Zebedee, had suffered martyrdom some years before. (Acts xii. 2.) But the circumstances of this appearance are no where recorded, nor have we any credible account when it happened; only we learn from the order in which it is placed by the apostle Paul, that it was after Christ's appearance to the five hundred brethren. See note [b] on Luke xxiv. 34, p. 604.

[d] And at these times of his conversing with them.] As I have inserted in the first paragraph of this section what is said in the first epistle to the Corinthians, of our Lord's appearance to the five hundred brethren, and to James, so I have thought it proper to introduce in this and the next section what relates to this story in the beginning of the Acts, (chap. i.—2—12.) which renders the narration more complete, and finishes the account which the sacred writers give us of the history of our Lord to the time of his ascension.

through the Holy Ghost [he gave] commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen;

what was the nature and design of their office; [*and*] *through the Holy Spirit*, which was given not by measure to himself, and which he had lately breathed into them, *he gave commandments* and instructions *to the apostles whom he had chosen*, how they were to act: *To whom also* he gave abundant evidences of the truth of his resurrection, and *shewed himself* to be *alive after he had suffered* death, *by many infallible* proofs and *tokens*; *being seen of them* at various times *for* the space of *forty days* after his resurrection, *and speaking* to them *of the things which related to the kingdom of God.*

SECT. CCII. Acts I. 2

3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. 3

LUKE XXIV. 44. And [Jesus came and spake unto them saying,] These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the Psalms, concerning me. [Mat. xxviii. 18.—]

And these his last interviews with them were chiefly at Jerusalem, to which they returned soon after his appearance to them on the mountain in Galilee; *and Jesus* also *came* thither, *and* made them repeated visits: and on one of these occasions, he *spake unto them, saying*,[c] *These* [*are*] *the words which I spake unto you*, and these the intimations that I often gave you, *while I was yet* dwelling *among you, that all the things must be* exactly *fulfilled which are written* in the scriptures *concerning me*, both *in* the pentateuch which is called *the law of Moses, and in the* books of the succeeding *prophets, and in the Psalms* and other poetical books of the Old Testament.

Luke xxiv. 44

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

And *at the same time he* not only in words expounded to them the sense of the sacred writers, but also by a secret operation on their intellectual faculties *opened their minds, that they might understand the scriptures* in their reference to him. 45

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from

And in a most convincing manner he enlarged upon the important subject, *and said to them*, When you consider all these things, you must certainly perceive, *that thus it was written, and thus it was necessary*, in conformity to the counsel of God, and for the manifestation of his glory, *that the Messiah should suffer, and should rise again from the* 46

[c] On one of these occasions he *spake*, &c.] I use this indeterminate form of expression, because I see no mark by which we can particularly ascertain the time when the following discourse was delivered; only, I think it very plain it must be after their return to Jerusalem, (see Luke xxiv. 49.) and consequently a very few days before our Lord's ascension.—I have thrown all that the three evangelists say of these discourses into one continued discourse, though perhaps some of them might be delivered at different times.

SECT. CCII. Luke XXIV. 47

dead, as I have done, *on the third day*; *And that*, in consequence of this, and on this great foundation, the important doctrines of *repentance and forgiveness of sins* through faith in him *should be preached in his name*, and by his authority, *to all* the *nations* of the earth, *beginning* first *at Jerusalem* itself, though polluted with the blood of the Prince of life.[f]

the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Mat. xxviii. 18

You know indeed (added he) how cruelly the Jews have treated me, and how ungratefully they have rejected me; but their outrageous malice has now done its utmost, and my heavenly Father has not only rescued me from their hands, but is exalting me to all that height of dignity and glory which the sacred oracles have so pathetically described: for *all authority is now given unto me* both *in heaven and on earth*; and, in accomplishment of what was promised to the Messiah, I am raised to a kingdom which comprehends both the upper and lower worlds, and entitles me to the homage of angels as well as of men. *And* yet, though I could so easily command the ministry of those more glorious creatures, it suits best with the scheme of my gospel to make use of *you*; who *shall* accordingly *be witnesses of* all *these things*, by publishing the certain knowledge that you have of the important truths of my death and resurrection;[g]

MAT. XXVIII. 18. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Luke xxiv. 48

LUKE XXIV. 48. And ye are witnesses of these things.

[f] *Beginning at Jerusalem.*] As for the grammatical construction of the Greek word ἀρξάμενον, it would be foreign from the design of these notes to enter into it farther than to refer the learned reader to Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 288.) and Raphelius, (Annot. ex Herod. p. 276, 277.) and to the original of Luke xxiii. 5; xxiv. 27; and Acts x. 37.—It was both graciously and wisely appointed by our Lord, that the gospel should begin to be preached at Jerusalem; graciously as it encouraged the repentance of the greatest sinners, when they saw that even the murderers of Christ were not exempted from the offers of gospel-mercy; and wisely, as hereby Christianity was more abundantly attested, the facts being published just on the spot where they happened; and as the vast concourse of people of various nations, present there at the feast of pentecost, would contribute greatly to its more speedy spread.

[g] *You shall be witnesses of these things.*] That this was the grand business of the apostles, is evident; and the ingenious author of Miscellanea Sacra, (Essay I. p. 17—23.) has taken great pains to shew how the title of witnesses and the office of testifying *is in* the sacred writings propriated to the apostles. But although it was indeed essential to the apostolic office, that they who bore it should be able to testify the facts as of their own personal knowledge; yet it is certain, that a great many others, who were not apostles, were able to testify the same; and it was their duty, and no doubt their care to do it, as Providence gave them an opportunity: and the apostles had many other duties incumbent upon them for the edification of the church, and in order to the performance of them were

SECT. CCII.

and who are therefore to look upon it as the great business of your lives to spread the notices and evidences of these facts. *And*, that you may be fully qualified for so high an office, *behold I* am shortly to *send upon you the* great *promise of my Father*, relating to the miraculous effusion of the Holy Spirit upon you. (Compare Joel ii. 28; and Acts ii. 16, 17.) And as the Divine Wisdom sees fit to honour this place, sinful as it is, with the first view of this surprising appearance, I charge you not to go from hence before you have received those gifts and graces you shall be furnished with for the discharge of your ministry; *but do you continue* here *in the city of Jerusalem till you are invested with* this *power from on high*;[h] whereby you will be enabled to bear your testimony in so advantageous and convincing a manner, that no falsehood or sophistry will be able finally to stand before you.

Luke XXIV. 49

49 And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

And further *he said to them*, When you shall thus be furnished with the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, *go forth into all* parts of *the world, and preach the gospel to every* human *creature* under heaven to whom Providence may lead you, whether Jew or Gentile: And take care that you deliver it with becoming seriousness; and let them see to it that they receive it with proportionable regard; for it is a matter of infinite importance. And accordingly I now solemnly declare, That *he who* sincerely *believes* your testimony, *and*, in token of that cordial faith, *is baptized* in my name, and continues to maintain a temper and conduct suitable to that engagement, *shall* certainly *be saved* with a complete and everlasting salvation: *but he who believeth not* this my gospel, when offered with such convincing evidence,[i] and finally persists in wilful impenitence and unbelief, (as he re-

Mark. xvi. 15.

MARK XVI. 15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

16

16 He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

furnished with extraordinary gifts and powers, for which they would have had little occasion had it been their only business to testify these facts.

[h] *Continue in the city of Jerusalem till you are invested*, &c.] This passage utterly overthrows Mr. Whiston's assertion, that all this discourse was delivered on the night Christ rose from the dead; and that the ascension related by Luke in the conclusion of this chapter, is not that at the end of forty days, when he quitted this earth, to return to it no more, but a previous ascension which was made on the resurrection-day. For nothing can be more certain, than that the apostles did quit Jerusalem between Christ's resurrection and the descent of the Spirit, and went into Galilee by Christ's appointment, which was signified to them by the angel and by himself too.

[i] When opened with such convincing

SECT. CCII. jects the most gracious counsel of God for his recovery, *shall be condemned*, by his righteous judgment, to future and everlasting punishment,[k] and shall to his dreadful experience find that gospel which he has despised to be a savour of death to him.

Mark XVI. 16.

Observe then the extent of your commission; and *go forth therefore*, not only into Judea, but into all the rest of the world, *and proselyte all the nations* of the earth to the faith and obedience of my gospel,[l] *baptizing them in the* awful and venerable *name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*;[m] that by this

Mat. xxviii. 19

MAT. XXVIII. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

evidence.] This is by no means a proper place to inquire into the proportion between the evidence which was peculiar to the days of the apostles, and that which is common to our own. But I hope it will be considered on the one hand, how improbable it is, that a divine revelation, introduced as the gospel was, should ever be left so destitute of proofs in after ages, that an honest man, after impartial consideration, might reject it; and on the other, how fit it was, that the danger of neglecting it should be strongly declared, lest it should seem itself to have left men at liberty to trifle with it.

[k] *Shall be condemned*, &c.] As for the objection which has been urged against the truth of Christianity, from the damnatory sentence which it here and elsewhere pronounces on those that reject it, I have considered it at large, since the former publication of this volume, and attempted to shew that it is so far from being conclusive, that it would rather have been a greater difficulty in the scheme of Christianity if it had contained no such sentence. See my second letter to the Author of Christianity not founded on Argument, p. 28—47. And I most earnestly entreat any reader, who fancies there is any force in what the deists urge on this head, attentively to consider what is there offered, before he presume on the contrary sentiment, which may perhaps be an error as fatal as it is absurd.

[l] *Proselyte all the nations* of the earth.] The whole tenor of the succeeding books of the New Testament shews that Christ designed by this commission that the gospel should be preached to all mankind without exception, not only to the Jews, but to all the idolatrous Gentiles: but the prejudices of the apostles led them at first to mistake the sense, and to imagine that it referred only to their going to preach the gospel to the Jews among all nations, or to those who should be willing to become Jews.—I render the word μαθητευσατε, *proselyte*, that it may be duly distinguished from διδασκοντες, *teaching*, (in the next verse), with which our version confounds it. The former seems to import instruction in the essentials of religion, which it was necessary adult persons should know and submit to, before they could regularly be admitted to baptism; the latter may relate to those more particular admonitions in regard to Christian faith and practice, which were to be built on that foundation.—It is certain, that no argument can be drawn from hence to the prejudice of infant-baptism: for had Christ sent out these missionaries to propagate Judaism in the world, he might have used the same language: "Go, and proselyte all nations, circumcising them in the name of the God of "Israel, and teaching them to observe "all that Moses commanded."

[m] *Baptizing them in the name of the Father*, &c.] Though I dare not assert that the use of these very words is essential to Christian baptism, yet surely the expression must intimate the necessity of some distinct regard to each of the sacred three, which is always to be maintained in the administration of this ordinance; and consequently it must imply, that more was said to those of whose baptism we read in the Acts, than is there recorded, before they were admitted to it. The Christian Church in succeeding ages has acted a wise and safe part in retaining these words; and they contain so strong an intimation, that each of these persons is properly God, and that worship is to be paid, and glory ascribed to each, that I

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solemn initiatory ordinance they may profess their subjection to each of these Divine persons, and, maintaining suitable regards to each, may receive from each correspondent blessings: And see that you instruct the converts whom you so baptize, *teaching them to* keep and *observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;* as remembering that I am the Lord, and you only the messengers of my will. *And*, while you act in pursuance of these directions, though numberless difficulties will appear in your way, yet be not discouraged at them; for *behold, I am always with you*, to support and comfort you, and in some measure at least to succeed your labours; and I will to such purposes as these be with all my faithful ministers who shall succeed you in the work, *even to the end of the world.*[n] *Amen!* O blessed Jesus, so may it indeed be! And may this important promise be fulfilled to us and to our successors, to the remotest ages, in its full extent![o]

Mat. xxxviii. 20

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

MARK XVI. 17. And these signs shall follow them that be-

And he yet farther added, So far as it is necessary and expedient for the confirmation of my gospel, and the establishment of my cause and interest in the world, a miraculous power shall attend you, and others who shall join with you or succeed you in the first plantation of my church: and in particular, *these signs*, and others no less wonderful, *shall follow them that believe*, and be performed by those who in a lively manner exercise their faith in God, when he is inwardly exciting them to such operations:[p]

Mark xvi. 17.

cannot but hope they will be a means of maintaining the belief of the one, and the practice of the other, among the generality of Christians to the end of the world.

[n] *I am always with you, even to the end of the world.*] As Christ's presence with his surviving apostles and other ministers was as necessary after the destruction of Jerusalem as before it, nothing seems more unreasonable than to limit these words by such an interpretation, as to refer them only to that period: nor does it indeed appear, that the end of the world is ever used in any other than the most extensive sense.

[o] *Amen!*—so may it indeed be!] Though the word Amen, with which each of the gospels end, seems chiefly to have been intended as an intimation of the conclusion of the book, and as an asseveration of the certain truth of the things contained in it; yet I think the turn here given to it in Matthew very natural, considering its connection with that promise, which was undoubtedly the greatest strength and joy of that good man's heart. St. John uses the like turn in more express language, in the last verse but one of the Revelation. *Surely I come quickly: Amen! Even so, come Lord Jesus!*

[p] *These signs shall follow them that believe*, &c.] It is exceeding evident, that the word *believe*, in this place, must signify something different from that faith which had in the preceding verse of Mark

SECT. CCII. Mark XVI. 17. *in my name they shall cast out* the most obstinate and mischievous *demons*, who may have possessed the bodies of men; *they shall* by an extraordinary, and hitherto unknown effusion of my Spirit, be enabled with the greatest fluency and propriety to *speak in* various *new lan-*

lieve: in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues.

18 *guages* which they have never learnt; *They shall take up serpents* without being bitten or endangered by them;[q] *and if*, by some secret or open attempt made to destroy them, *they drink any deadly* and malignant *poison, it shall not hurt them;*[r] [*and*] when *they shall lay* [*their*] *hands on the sick* and infirm, it shall be attended with a healing virtue, *and they shall* immediately *recover* without the use of any farther means. So that in consequence of this extraordinary confirmation, my gospel shall meet with a very general reception, and my heavenly Father, according to his promise, "shall "give me the heathen for mine inheritance, "and the uttermost parts of the earth for my "possession." (See Psal. ii. 8.)

18 They shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Such was the purport of our Lord's discourse, and in this manner he conversed with his disciples till his ascension, with the account of which illustrious fact we shall conclude this important history of his life.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xxviii. 16 WITH how ill a grace could the Jews complain of any deficiency in the evidence of our Lord's resurrection, when he appeared alive to so great a number as five hundred at once! He

been required as indispensably necessary to salvation; and can have no other rational interpretation than what is here given.

[q] *They shall take up serpents.*] Jamblicus, (Vit. Pythag. cap. 28.) says that Pythagoras could do this; and very credible writers have asserted, that in the eastern nations, there is an art of charming snakes and serpents by the force of music, so as for a while to suspend their disposition to hurt. (See Bochart. Hierozoic. part 2, lib. iii. cap. 6; and compare Psalm lviii. 4, 5; and Eccles. x. 11.) But this power was undoubtedly exercised without any such artifice, and included, (as in the case of Paul, Acts xxviii. 3—5.) an ability to heal the most dangerous wounds given by the bite of the most noxious animals.

[r] *If* by some secret or open attempt made to destroy them, *they drink*, &c.] I add this clause, that none may imagine God ever intended that these miraculous powers should be used merely for ostentation, or to gratify the curiosity of spectators. Considering to what degrees of cursed refinement the art of poisoning was by this time brought, as well as how frequently execution was done, by giving poison to condemned persons in the age and country in which the apostles lived, such a promise as this will appear more important than the reader might at first apprehend.

glad must these disciples be when they saw the Lord! and with what pleasure must they hear him speaking of those things which concerned the kingdom of God! SECT. CCII.

We have surely perpetual reason for thankfulness, when we think of that commission which Christ gave to his disciples: nor is it a circumstance of little importance, that they had it in charge, when they published this message of grace, to begin at Jerusalem; though the religious opportunities that were abused by that ungrateful city had already been so great, and their provocations so many. Amazing condescension of the Prince of Peace, that he sent his ambassadors of peace to them when they had hardly laid aside the weapons with which they had slain him, and were scarce rested after the cruel fatigue which their officious malice had given them in abetting his murder! Behold, he offers them all the invaluable blessings purchased by his blood, while it was yet, as we may say, warm upon mount Calvary! and on the same principles, even unto this day, *where sin hath abounded*, there *is grace abounding much more.* (Rom. v. 20.) Acts i. 3. Luke xxiv. 47.

The commission he gave his apostles, though it began at Jerusalem, did not end there; nor was it confined within the narrow limits of Judea; but they were appointed to *go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.* We to this day, in our remote land, enjoy the benefit of it. Let us remember the important consequences that will one way or another attend the gospel thus brought us. *If we believe* it, *we shall be saved; but if we believe* it *not*, we *shall be damned.* Life, or death, O my soul, is the certain issue of it, with regard to thee in particular. *Be surety to thy servant, O Lord, for good,* (Psal. cxix. 122.) and *let my life be precious in thy sight!* Mark xvi. 15, 16.

Christ opened the understanding of the apostles, to apprehend the sense of scripture. Let us study that sacred book with an humble dependence upon the aid of that blessed Spirit by whom it was dictated. And let these apostles who are thus divinely taught, be reverently regarded as our surest guides, when we are studying the oracles of the Old Testament; considering the extraordinary commission with which Christ sent them forth, the power from on high with which he invested them, and the ample credentials which he thereby gave them. Luke xxiv. 45. 49.

These miraculous donations are now ceased, but that valuable promise still continues in force, That *he will be with* his ministers *always, even unto the end of the world.* In the strength of that gracious assurance, O thou *faithful and true Witness*, would thine humble ambassadors still go forth to all the labours and difficulties before them: *remember thy word unto thy servants*, (Psal. cxix. 49.) and *may it be unto us according to it!* Amen! Mat. xxviii. 20.

SECT. CCIII.

Christ, after his last discourse with his disciples, ascends to heaven in their sight, from the mount of Olives in the neighbourhood of Bethany; and they joyfully return to Jerusalem, waiting for the Spirit, Mark XVI. 19, *to the end.* Luke XXIV. 50, *to the end.* John XX. 30, *to the end.* XXI. *ult.* Acts I. 4—12.

SECT. CCIII.

Acts I. 4

ACTS I. 4.

SUCH was the conversation Jesus had with his disciples at Jerusalem, and such the commission he gave them: *and* now at length, *having gathered them together* on the fortieth day after his resurrection, *he charged them* again, as he had done before, (Luke xxiv. 49, p. 625.) *not to depart from Jerusalem*, to employ themselves in any secular cares at home; *but* rather *to* spend some succeeding days in extraordinary devotion in the temple, or in their secret retirements; that they might, with the most becoming temper, *wait for the* accomplishment of that *promise of the Father, which,* [*said he*] *you have* again and again *heard from me*, both before and since my resurrection. (Compare John xiv. 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7; and Luke xxiv. 49.) *For John indeed baptized with water*, when he was sent to call men to repentance; *but* you well know, that he declared at the same time, "there was one coming after him, who should "baptize in a more glorious manner with the "Holy Spirit:" (see Mat. iii. 11, Vol. I. page 106.) And in accomplishment of this prediction, as you are now to be sent forth to preach the gospel, and to bear witness of me as the true Messiah, that whosoever shall believe in me may obtain remission of sins, *you* shall be plentifully furnished from above with all those graces that may enable you to fulfil your ministry, and by my means *shall be baptized with* an extraordinary effusion of *the Holy Spirit*; and this shall be done *not many days hence.*

Luke xxiv. 50

And he then took them with him out of the city, and passing over the brook Kedron again, in a very different manner from that in which he had lately crossed it, (John xviii. 1, p. 475, 476.) *he led them out* to the mount of Olives, and

ACTS I. 4.

AND being assembled together with them, [he] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.

LUKE XXIV. 50.

—And he led them

out as far as to Bethany.

Acts 1. 6. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

brought them through that ridge of hills, *as far as to* the boundaries of *Bethany.*[a] SECT. CCIII.

When therefore they were come together with such peculiar solemnity, and Jesus had thus assembled them in a body (as they apprehended, on some extraordinary occasion), *they asked him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time,* when they have just been guilty of such aggravated wickedness, *restore the kingdom to Israel?* And wilt thou now in such a manner shew thy favour to a nation which so well deserves to be destroyed, that Israel shall at this time be raised from its servitude, to that extensive empire which ancient prophecies have led us to expect under the government of the Messiah? Acts 1. 6

7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

But, as Jesus was not willing to enter on a subject, concerning which the Spirit would soon rectify their notions, *he* chose to check their curiosity, and *said to them,* whatever the schemes of providence may be, *it is not for you to know,* and therefore is not proper for you to inquire, what are *those times or seasons which the Father has placed under his own authority:* the Messiah's kingdom shall indeed be triumphant, and the Israel of God shall reign with him; but where, or when, or how this shall be, it is not your present business to inquire: And therefore now let not these secret things engage and take up your attention; *but* let me rather exhort you to mind your present duty, and to leave the event of things to God: and to prepare you for the important service you are called to, *you shall* indeed, as I before have told you, *receive the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon* 7

8 But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and 8

[a] *As far as to* the boundaries of Bethany.] This at least must be the import of the word ἕως; but what is said elsewhere, will not allow us to extend it to the town itself: for the town of Bethany was about fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, (John xi. 18.) whereas the place from which our Lord ascended, on mount Olivet, was but a sabbath-day's journey, or about half that distance from Jerusalem, (Acts i. 12.) So that to reconcile what Luke here tells us in his gospel, with the account he gives us of our Lord's ascension in the Acts, we must conclude, that he conducted his disciples only to the boundaries of Bethany, which came much nearer to Jerusalem, and took in part of the mount of Olives. (See note[a] on Mat. xxi. 1, p. 280.)—It is indeed possible, that our Lord might make his last visit on earth to Lazarus and his pious sisters; but it is manifest, he did not ascend from the town of Bethany, where many others must have seen him, but from the mount of Olives, where none beheld him but his own disciples; nor is there any intimation in the words of the evangelist, that he came from Bethany to the mount of Olives on the day of his ascension, but rather that he went directly from Jerusalem thither.

SECT. CCIII.

you; and by this means you *shall be* qualified to be *my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and even to the ends of the earth;* and you shall gather in subjects to my kingdom in the remotest regions, and subdue multitudes to the obedience of faith.

Acts 1. 8

ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Luke xxiv. 50

And, then, *lifting up his hands* in a most solemn and devout manner, *he blessed them,* as one that had authority, not only to desire, but to command a blessing on them; and recommended them to the guardianship and care of his heavenly Father, to whom, after so long an abode on earth, he was now returning.

Luke XXIV. — 50 And he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 *And it came to pass, after the Lord had spoken these things unto them,* and had with great affection and solemnity discoursed with his disciples of the work they were to do, and of the power they should have to qualify them for it, even *while he was blessing them, he was* miraculously *separated from them. And while they* stedfastly *beheld* him, and fixed their eyes upon him with the strictest observation, *he was taken up* from the ground on which he stood, *and* gradually *carried up into heaven,*[b] as it seemed by the ministry of attending angels (though he could certainly have ascended merely by his own power): *and* while he hovered in the air, at some distance from them, *a* bright *cloud* appeared, as a kind of triumphant chariot which God had prepared on this great occasion, and *received him out of their sight: and,* passing through crowds of adoring angels, *he* ascended to a throne highly exalted above all theirs, and *sat* down, even *at the right hand of God,* on a seat of the highest dignity and authority, there to reign in the glories of his mediatorial kingdom, till all things shall be put under his feet. (See 1 Cor. xv. 25, 27.)

Acts 1. 9

51—And it came to pass [after the Lord had spoken [Acts, these things] unto them], while he blessed them, he was parted from them. [Mark xvi. 19. —Acts 1. 9.—]

Acts 1.—9. And while they beheld, he was taken up, [Luke, and carried up into heaven,] and a cloud received him out of their sight, [and *he* sat on the right-hand of God.] [Mark xvi.—19. Luke xxiv.—51.]

10 *And as they were stedfastly looking up to hea-*

10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven, as he

[b] *While they beheld, he was taken up,* &c.] It will, I hope, be remembered, that it was for majesty, and not of necessity, that our Lord used the ministration of angels in carrying himself to heaven. —Dr. Jennings has observed with his usual sagacity and propriety, (Serm. at Berry-street, Vol. I. p. 373.) that it was much more proper our Lord should ascend to heaven in the sight of his apostles; than that he should rise from the dead in their sight: for his resurrection was proved, when they saw him alive after his passion; but they could not see him in heaven, while they continued upon earth.

went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

ven, while he went on in his amazing and triumphant progress, *behold, two* angels, in the form of *men, in white* and shining *raiment*, being of the number of those whose ministration God was pleased to make use of in this illustrious event, came and *stood near them; Who also* spake to them, and *said, Ye men of Galilee, why do ye stand gazing up to heaven* with such great astonishment? Is it not what your Lord himself has often told you, that he was soon to return to the glory from which he came? And we are now sent hither to assure you, that, *this Jesus, who is* thus *taken up from you into heaven, shall so come* again, *in the* very *same manner as you have* now *beheld him go into heaven:* for the great day shall surely come, when he will visibly descend from heaven in a cloud of glory, attended as now with a guard of angels, to dispense their final judgment to all the inhabitants of the world: but in the mean time, the heavens must receive him, and you must no more expect his company on earth.

SECT. CCIII. Acts I. 10, 11

11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

LUKE XXIV. 52. And they worshipped him, and [then] returned to Jerusalem, with great joy [from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath-day's journey:] [Acts I. 12.]

And his disciples were so fully satisfied of his Divine power and glory, that *they worshipped him* with the humblest reverence though he was now become invisible to them; *and then* (as he had ordered them) *returned to Jerusalem with great joy, from the mount called Olivet*, where he was parted from them; *which is* but *a sabbath day's journey*, or about a mile distant *from Jerusalem:*[c] and it exceedingly rejoiced their hearts to think that Jesus their Lord was in this singular manner honoured by his heavenly Father, and received up into a state of everlasting felicity and glory, in which he would be able to protect all his followers, and to provide

Luke xxiv. 52

[c] *Which is a sabbath-day's journey from Jerusalem.*] A sabbath-day's journey is generally reckoned by the Jews to be two thousand cubits; which was the distance between the ark and the camp, when they marched; (Josh. iii. 4.) and probably the same proportion was observed when they rested. This is usually computed at about eight furlongs, or a mile. But as the camp took in a large extent of ground, and this was only the distance of those that encamped nearest to the ark; so it is evident, that as all the people were to repair on the sabbath-day to the place of God's public worship, a sabbath-day's journey was more than two thousand cubits to those whose station in the camp was more remote from the ark: yet when they were afterwards settled in towns, they allowed no more than two thousand cubits for a sabbath-day's journey. (See Selden, de Jur. Nat. & Gent. lib. iii. cap. 9, and Lightfoot, Hor. Hebr. on Luke xxiv. 50; and Acts i. 12.) Compare note * in this section, on Luke xxiv. 50.

SECT. CCIII.

in the most effectual manner for their present and eternal happiness. *And they were always in the temple*, that is, they constantly attended there at proper times, and were daily present at the hours of prayer,[d] *praising and blessing God*, both in his house, and in their own retirements. *Amen!* May God always be praised by us, and by all who receive his gospel, for the discoveries and attestations of it, given to these his servants, and by them to us!

Luke XXIV. 53

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

Mark xvi. 20.

And, in a few days after this, (as will be shewn more largely in the following history,) their ascended Lord, in remembrance of his promise to them, sent down as a royal donative the extraordinary influences of his Spirit upon them, fully to qualify them for that important office to which they were designed. *And going forth* with this furniture, *they preached* the gospel *every where* throughout the whole Roman empire, and even among the barbarous nations, with amazing success, *the Lord*, according to his promise, *working with them, and confirming the word* of his grace *by the signs* and miracles *which followed* it; which were at once the most solid, as well as the most obvious and popular demonstrations of those Divine truths which they delivered. *Amen!* So may the presence of the Lord be always with his faithful ministers! and may his gospel be attended every where with efficacy and success, as well as with convincing evidences of its Divine authority!

MARK XVI. 20. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

John xxi. 25

And thus we have given a summary account of the most remarkable passages of the life of Christ during the time of his abode on earth: but after all, it must be considered only as a specimen, rather than a full narration: for *there are also many other things that Jesus* said and *did, and*

JOHN XXI. 25. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the many other sig[illegible]

[d] *And they were always in the temple.*] Some have imagined, (by comparing this with Acts i. 13, 14.) that the apostles dwelt for some time afterwards in an upper chamber of the temple; but they had no such interest with the priests, as to allow us to suppose they would permit them to lodge in an apartment of the temple. It is sufficient that they were always there at the proper seasons; for it is well known that by night the temple was shut up. Compare Luke ii. 37, Vol. I. p. 76. and John xviii. 20. Vol. II. p. 503.) They probably joined their voices with the chorus of the Levites, as no doubt other pious Israelites did; and must surely, from what they had already seen and known, have learnt to use many of the psalms sung by them, in a much sublimer sense than the generality of the people could.

ly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. [John XX. 30.]

indeed many other signs and miracles, that *Jesus wrought* both before and after his resurrection, *in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book* of the four evangelists, which is here completed; and *which* indeed are so numerous, that *if every one* [*of them*] *should be recorded* in all its circumstances, *I am persuaded* the work would amount to so vast a bulk, that *the world itself would not* be able to *receive the books that should be written*; but the very size of the volumes would necessarily prevent the generality of mankind from procuring or reading them.[c] *But these* most necessary and important *things are written*, in this plain way, and in this portable volume, not merely that the reader may be amused by so curious a story, but that the faith, the hope, and the piety of Christians, may be confirmed; and especially *that you may* more firmly and assuredly *believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God*, partaking of the same Divine glory with the Father, and the sure object of his people's confidence; *and that believing* it, *you may* be so influenced by his instructive discourses, his complete example, and his dying love, that you may *have* eternal *life through his name.* And may God grant, that as it is all most certainly and circumstantially true, so it may have that happy effect upon all those by whom this history is perused, from age to age! *Amen.*

SECT. CCIII. John XX. 25

John XX. 31. But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name. [Amen.] John xxi.—25.]

John xx. 31

IMPROVEMENT.

THUS did our victorious *Saviour ascend on high, and lead captivity captive: the chariots of God* which attended him were

Luke xxiv. 51

[c] *The world itself would not* be able to *receive the books*, &c.] There would be no great inconvenience in allowing an hyperbole here, as most expositors do, of which we meet with other instances in scripture: (see Gen. xi. 4; Numb. xiii. 33; and compare John xii. 19.) But I think the sense given in the paraphrase easier and more suited to the remarkable plainness of St. John's style. Elsner explains this passage, as if the evangelist had said, "If they were all to be particularly written the unbelieving world "would not admit them, so as to be moved by them to faith and obedience." And he produces instances in which χωρεῖν has such a signification. But, as John knew the unbelieving world would reject even what he had writ, this could be no reason for his writing no more.—Perhaps it may be a most delightful part of the entertainment of the heavenly world, to learn from our blessed Lord himself, or from those who conversed with him on earth, a multitude of such particulars of his life, as will be well worthy our everlasting admiration. In the mean time, the pious and attentive study of what is here recorded, may most happily prepare us for such discoveries, and add an unutterable relish to them: *Amen!* So may it be, to the Author of this Exposition, and to all those who do, or may peruse it!

SECT. CCIII. *twenty thousand, even thousands of angels!* (Psal. lxviii. 17, 18:) and being *gone into heaven*, he *is* there seated *on the right hand of God; angels and authorities, and powers being made subject to him;* (1 Pet. iii. 22.) Let us his humble followers look after him with holy joy and pleasing expectation; congratulating his triumphs, and trusting through his grace to share them.

Acts I. 9, 10

Luke xxiv. 52 Like the apostles, let us bow down and worship him; and while we continue here below, let us make it our daily labour and care to *seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God:* (Col. iii. 1.) And instead of amusing ourselves with the vain dreams of temporal grandeur and felicity, or with curious inquiries after those *times and seasons which the Father hath reserved in his own power*, let us apply with vigour and zeal to that business which he has assigned us, labouring to the utmost to promote his gospel, and by a diligent improvement of our time and opportunities, to prepare for his final appearance, when *the Lord himself shall descend from heaven*, with more public splendour than he returned thither, and shall come in *the glory of his Father, and his own glory*, with a majestic pomp which *every eye shall see*, and with the *sound of a trumpet*, which even all the nations of the *dead shall hear*.

Acts i. 7

11

Mark xvi. 20. In the mean time, let us thankfully own his gracious presence with his disciples, whom he left behind him; and with admiring gratitude reflect upon the happy consequences of that presence, in the establishment of the gospel in the world, and the transmission of it even unto us, in so remote an age and country.

John xxi. 25 Let us especially praise him for these sacred records which contain such an authentic and exact account of those important facts in which we are all so nearly concerned; records incomparably more valuable than the writings of our private estates, or the charters of our public liberties. Let us earnestly pray, that their great design may be answered in us; and make it our importunate request to Him who is the giver of all grace, that through the operations of that Holy Spirit, without the influence of which even scripture itself, with all our advantages for understanding and improving it, will be but a sealed book, or a dead letter, our faith may be nourished and confirmed by every portion of it which we read; and that our hearts may be so delivered into the mould of his word, that *believing on Christ*, under all the characters he bears, we *may have life through his name;* and may at length *receive the end of our faith, in the* complete *salvation of our souls*, through him, to whom with the *Father*, and the eternal *Spirit*, be undivided honours and everlasting praises. *Amen*, and *Amen!*

John xx. 31

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

A TABLE *for the more ready finding any Verse of the Evangelists in the foregoing Harmony.*

N. B. The *verses* between those inserted in this *table* follow each other in the same *section*, and begin at the *page* referred to. Thus in *Mat. chap.* I. the *verses* from verse 1 to verse 17, are in *sect.* ix. and begin at *page* 56. And then from verse 18 to verse 25, which ends the chapter, they are in *sect.* viii. and begin at *page* 52.

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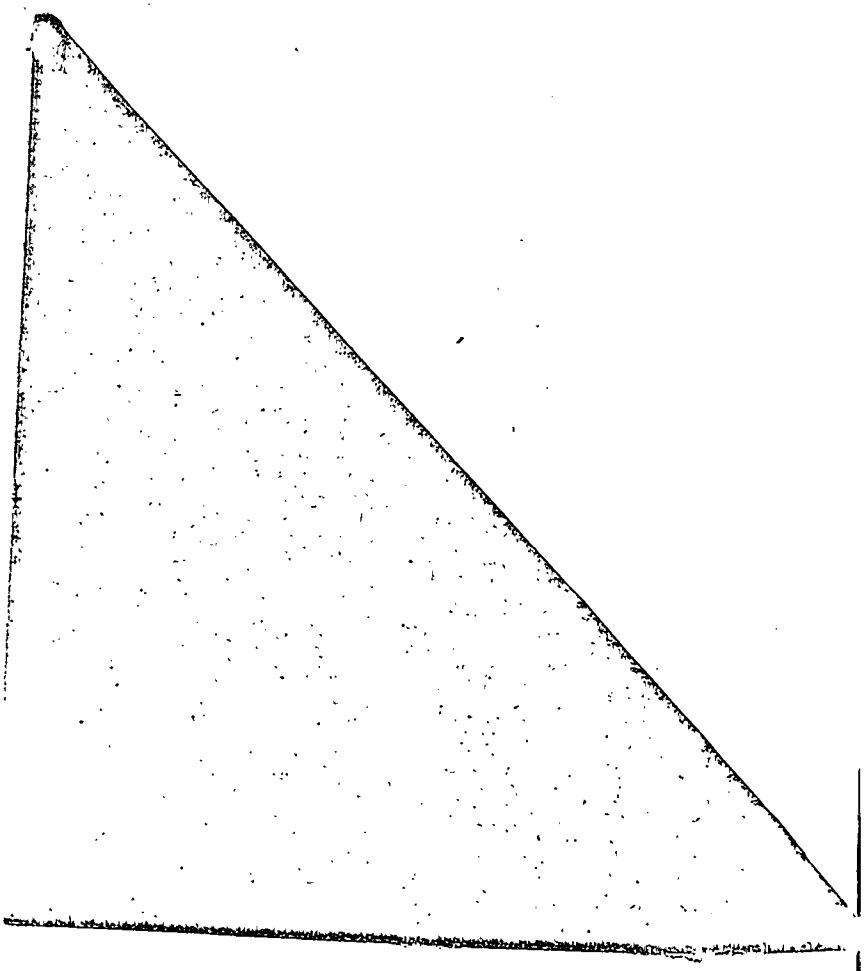

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